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Local Government SERVICE

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

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CIVICS IN THE SCHOOL —Page 415

FIRST AID FOR THE DEMOBILISED

BY the end of this year, 1,100,000 men and women will have been released from the Forces. By June next year, the figure will have risen to more than 2,000,000. Should the Government respond—as we have no doubt it will—to the call for speedier demobilisation, those figures will be substantially increased.

Every one of those millions will return to civil life with a host of personal problems. Many will want homes, with all that accompanies that need—fuel, furniture, schools for children. All will need ration cards and guidance through the intricacies of the rationing system. Many, with experience in the Forces of an efficient health and medical service, will look for a similar service in civil life.

Resettlement advice offices have been set up to help the returning warrior with these and similiar problems. But they cannot answer every question, and many in search of help will be, and are being, referred to their council offices. For the next few months, our town halls will be filled with a constant stream of men and women, all a little bewildered, a little worried, and more than a little exasperated, seeking information, help, and advice. As in the days of the "blitz," local government will have another great opportunity to demonstrate to the citizen that it exists to serve him.

Is it rising to this opportunity? The letter we publish this month from Major Donald Wright, and conversations we have had with other demobilised ex-service men, suggest that in some areas at least it is failing.

Inquiry Bureaux Needed

THERE are, we know, many good answers to the complaints of these men. The homes for which they are clamouring are not there. The furniture, linoleum, carpets, curtains, linen, and clothes they need do not exist. Schools are understaffed and overcrowded. Health services lack doctors, nurses, premises, and equipment. Every council office in the country is desperately short of qualified staff.

But are these answers good enough? Will it satisfy the man who built a camp for 20,000 displaced persons in Germany in a fortnight to tell him that he must wait for a house until the billeting officer returns from holiday? Will it satisfy the man who helped supply a whole division by air over the mountains of Burma to tell him that his broken fireplace cannot be repaired because of transport delays? Will it satisfy any worried warrior to find his demand for help and advice answered through a pigeon-hole by a 14-year-old junior, however well she has learned her piece? We doubt it.

Of course, local government is not wholly, nor even largely, responsible for the present crisis in housing, in manpower, in the supply of necessities of all kinds, nor can it alone solve the problems they have created. But it could, we feel, do more than in many areas it is doing to lighten the burden.

Taking first the point made by Major Wright, why cannot every council office set up, at once, a central inquiry bureau, staffed by competent officers, to deal with the many personal problems brought to it every day? Were inquirers to find, at one central point, representatives of the housing, health, and education departments, and of the food and fuel offices, able to deal courteously, authoritatively, and efficiently, with their difficulties, many worries would be speedily smoothed away—particularly were space to be found in the same building for the resettlement advice office and the citizens' advice bureau, with the Ministry of Labour office round the corner. It was done during the "blitz." It could be done today, given the realisation by every local authority—and every local government officer—that the satisfaction of the citizen to the utmost of its power is the first duty of local government.

How Build the Homes?

THE speedier building of homes, schools, clinics, and health centres depends at the moment more on action by the Central Government than it does on local authorities, and we still see little indication that those concerned have fully realised the gravity of the problem or are setting about its solution, as was promised, as a "major military operation." According to the Association of Building Technicians, we need 2,000,000 houses at once to provide a home of sorts for every family needing one, plus a further 4,000,000 to replace houses more than 65 years old. To meet that need, the White Paper prepared by the Coalition Government promised 220,000 permanent houses, together with 175,000 temporary houses, in two years. The new Minister of Health appears to be abandoning the programme of temporary housing, but has announced no fresh target for permanent houses. If the White Paper plan is adhered to, out of some 6,000,000 people who have no home of their own today, only just over one million will have been given homes by the end of 1947, and the rest will have to wait anything from two to ten years. That does not suggest the spirit, nor the achievement, which brought us from disarmament and near-defeat in 1940 to victory four years later.

The new Government is now drawing up its own plans and will, no doubt, have them ready when Parliament resumes. The more urgent, ambitious, and drastic they are, the better pleased will be the nation, weary as it is of procrastination and delay. In the meantime, local government officers must have many ideas calculated to accelerate and simplify the programme, to produce the houses and cut out the red tape. Why not voice them? This is a national emergency, to be solved only by the whole nation, working together with the same will and in the same unity of effort as it summoned after Dunkirk.

The Future of Rates

BUT will, unity, and hard work are not enough. Finance presents another and a terrifying problem. It is a truism to point out that if the great housing and social reconstruction programme is to be achieved without financial stress, the method of raising local revenue must be efficient and as little onerous as possible. The present rating system has been criticised as throwing its burdens where they can least easily be borne—upon impoverished areas and big families—and many proposals for its improvement have been advanced. To their discussion the Incorporated Association of Rating and Valuation Officers has now added its expert views in a long-awaited report on Reconstruction.

The Association does not accept the root and branch condemnation of the present system, and disposes rather summarily of proposed alternatives. Of local income tax, for example, it is content to argue that "it is doubtful whether the Government would agree" to it; that its effects would be "far-reaching"; and that it would be administratively impracticable (although it is in operation other countries). The Association accepts the rating of site values, as proposed in the Uthwatt report, as a supplementation of, not an alternative to, rates.

Some defects are admitted in the present system, and for these the Association proposes reforms. Public services should be classified as either beneficially affecting property, the

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cost of which should be met fully from rates, or as social services affecting the individual, the cost of which should be shared between local and national funds. The cost of town and country planning might be met from the proceeds of the taxation of land values and that of highways from the Road Fund. These reforms should be accompanied by a simplification of grants and rates and their relations with one another. The effect of such changes, in the Association's view, would be to lessen the charges falling on ratepayers and to render those charges more closely commensurate with the benefit derived from their payment.

More technical, but hardly less important, proposals include the revaluation of property, postponed from 1939, and the assessment of all property on uniform and accurate principles. A minimum size is urged for the areas of rating authorities, to ensure that they are large enough to afford competent and sufficient valuation staff and to reduce to a minimum the "effects of parochial influences." Staffing is described as vital to the efficiency of the service, on the ground that: "No other function of local government so actively touches the conscious lives of so many of the community. It is within the rating office that many have their only contact with the local authority. It is on the manner with which they are then dealt with that these formulate their opinion of the local authority and local government generally."

One other major administrative development advocated is the expansion of the functions of the Central Valuation Committee so as to widen its contribution to the technique of valuation and the promotion of uniformity.

With the spirit of the proposed reforms all local government officers will be in accord. They will welcome anything which makes for greater purity and efficiency of administration and which simplifies the task of collecting revenue and ensures its more equitable distribution. But some will, perhaps, regret that this body of experts, in spite of the wealth of their technical suggestions, have not tackled the problem of local government finance more radically and proposed alternatives to the present unsatisfactory form of taxation.

That Medical Exam.

THE return of the warriors has raised afresh, and in a more acute manner than before, the old problem of the medical examination as a pre-requisite for admission to the superannuation scheme. Two cases reported to Headquarters recently illustrate the difficulty. The first is of a local government officer discharged from the Forces with a 30 per cent disability pension. He was reinstated in his former job, later applied for and obtained a better job with another authority, but failed to pass the medical examination, and was refused the appointment. The second is of a man about 31 who, after spending four years in a German prison camp, was discharged, also with a 30 per cent disability pension, suffering from the effects of malnutrition. He, too, can claim his former job, but so long as the medical test remains, has little prospect of obtaining promotion elsewhere. There must be many in similar plight.

Nor are ex-warriors the only likely sufferers. Conference agreed to direct the N.E.C. to consider means of obtaining more openings in the local government service for non-infectious tuberculous persons. This was a laudable endeavour—but how is it going to overcome the obstacle of the medical test?

No Legal Barrier

IS it not time that this medical test was abandoned altogether? The 1937 Superannuation Act does not require it, although it does enable local authorities whose schemes were based upon earlier local Acts under which medical examination was compulsory to retain that rigid rule. But there is no legal objection to its abandonment.

The test was imposed primarily with the idea of maintaining the solvency of the Fund. Were local authorities to admit unfit officers to their staffs, it was argued, a proportion of them would be forced to retire owing to ill-health before the normal age of retirement, and would thus impose an excessive burden on the fund. But is this true? Longevity is by no means entirely a matter of health, and we all know of lifelong invalids who outlive those who "never had a day's illness." The man with a physical disability is more likely to look after his health than is the man accustomed to think of himself as perfectly fit. Moreover, if some of the unfit do crack up and claim a pension before their time, are they not equally likely to die before their time, and thus cease to be a burden on the fund? The fit man, indeed, may prove an even greater "burden," by living beyond the allotted span. There is, in short, no proof that the medical examination does protect the superannuation fund.

Against Public Interest

WHAT is certain, on the other hand, is that its imposition is contrary to public policy, in that it closes a wide field of employment to those who are physically handicapped. Were every profession and industry to impose a similar test, the handicapped and unfit would become unemployable also. Moreover, many branches of local government, with its regular hours, relatively good working conditions, and security of tenure, offer a field of activity especially well suited to the man or woman who, while unable to stand the strain of more competitive employment, would be able to work well and usefully in a less exacting environment. It would be unwise, especially in these days when the pressure of work is everywhere intensifying, to push this argument too far, and we certainly do not suggest that local government should be staffed largely by "crocks." But we do feel that the service, concerned as it is with health and public welfare, should set an example in this respect to other employers and give a fair chance of employment to those who are, physically, less well endowed than their fellows. The Minister of Labour has already indicated that he proposes to require every employer to provide jobs for a certain proportion of the disabled, and this action will, of itself, break the rigidity of the present practice. Would it not be well, therefore, to drop the practice altogether?

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

Appointment of General Secretary

The National Executive Council of the Association invites applications for the position of General Secretary. The commencing salary for the appointment will be £2,000, rising by annual increments of £100 to a maximum of £2,500, plus a cost of living bonus (at present £59 16s. per annum).

The appointment will be subject to medical examination and will be a permanent one, carrying the right of admission to the Staff Superannuation Fund on terms, particulars of which will be supplied to intending applicants. The appointment will be subject to three months' notice on either side.

The person appointed will be required to devote his whole time to the duties of the office. Applications must be submitted on the prescribed form obtainable from the Acting General Secretary, NALGO, 24, Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1. The application must be addressed to the President of the Association, in the special envelope provided, and must be received not later than 30th November, 1945. Canvassing is prohibited.

Records and Training

AMIDST the mass of plans and good intentions for the future it is refreshing to read of real achievements in the field of personnel records and post-entry training. In the supplies department of the London County Council, the chief officer, in co-operation with the staff departmental committee, has worked out a scheme of staff records. To provide a basis for estimating the capacities and progress of each officer, a simple form of record is to be completed each year, giving marks and ratings in respect of nine items; supervising ability, co-operation, potentiality, initiative, knowledge of work, accuracy, speed, method and neatness, and conduct. Argument could go on for ever over the ideal qualities which ought to form the basis of marking, but it is more important to congratulate the originators of this scheme on their enterprise than to criticise their plan in detail.

Their post-entry plans are not yet quite so complete, largely because they have wisely written to every colleague now in the Services and asked for his views about the kind of refresher training which will be wanted. The replies (nearly 100 per cent!) are now being digested. Some general principles are clear: new entrants are to have a simply-written document describing what the department does and how it does it; training "on the job" is to be systematised by means of a series of planned transfers; there will be talks and discussion groups, of which informality will be the dominating feature. Perhaps even more delicate a task than training newcomers or those returning from the Forces will be that of raising the standards of those who have been in the service for years and are confident that they "know all about it." Those who had to do with training in the Forces know the reluctance of the "old soldier" to go through a refresher course, just as civil defence workers who served through the "great" blitz resented "going to school" to learn the lessons of the enemy's later raiding technique. It will be interesting to see how this progressive scheme develops.

Man In Society

THE programmes arranged by the B.B.C. specially for discussion groups, are usually of interest to local government officers, and the current series, which began on October 1, promises to be no exception. Under the general title "Man in Society" the talks (to be broadcast every Monday at 7.30 p.m.) will give the views of psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists, on the problems pressing on the world today—such problems as the re-education of Germany, demobilisation, vocational and child guidance, the increase in crime, the right use of leisure, and the technique of living in a community.

Many of these problems concern the local government officer directly, others concern him indirectly, and all will involve him to an increasing extent as public control and enterprise widens its impact upon communal life. And even where—as with the re-education of Germany—he is not personally concerned, his experience should enable him to put forward helpful and constructive suggestions. Branches might well form groups to hear and discuss these programmes.

It is the aim of "Local Government Service" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in the journal—whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles—should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.

Schoolboys Learn Civics Through Practical Town Planning

By RAYMOND SOUTH, M.A. (Oxon), Senior History Master, and HOWARD QUINTON, F.R.S.A., M. Coll. H., Art Master, Windsor County Boys' School.

How can we best arouse the interest of Britain's future citizens in local government? This is a problem now confronting NALGO's public relations policy. Here, and in the following article, three schoolmasters show how it is being solved—at Windsor by an ambitious experiment in practical town planning, and at Manchester through a wide-ranging course in civics at a selective central school.

EVERYONE knows the Windsor of the picture postcards—the noble pile of the Castle rising above the Thames. But few of the many thousands of visitors who come to Windsor on pleasure bent see much of the town itself. Windsor is a shrine of British history, but it is also a place where twenty thousand people live and at present their town leaves much to be desired. The Windsor of to-day is not the result of planned development. It has just grown through the centuries of its history. Dingy streets cluster in a congested mass to the west of the Castle and, further out, the town sprawls in haphazard fashion in the narrow ribbon of land between the river on the north and Crown Lands on the south.

Part of the problem of modern Windsor—

Spontaneous Enthusiasm

There is every scope here for bold replanning and the boys of the Windsor County Boys' School have tackled it with enthusiasm and with some of the iconoclasm which is not the least attractive feature of youth. The Local Survey Club came into being spontaneously at the end of 1943, when a group of boys approached one of the writers and asked that such a club should be formed. They had grandiose ambitions. They wanted not merely to re-plan Windsor, but a vast undefined area around. However, we decided to start with Windsor and to work up to the universe later. Windsor so far has provided us with more than enough scope, and every problem explored brings a host of others in its train. Two masters have co-ordinated the work of the boys and guided their enthusiasm into constructive channels, but the outstanding feature of the club's activities from the start has been the initiative shown by the boys themselves.

Windsor bristles with planning problems. As with so many other towns, the trouble is that the damage has largely been done and, short of demolishing the whole town and starting afresh, solutions must often take the form of "making the best of a bad job."

For example, there is the problem of the railways. One railway cuts round the edge of the green expanse of the Home Park by the river and ends in a sham Gothic station at the foot of the Castle. Its goods yards obstruct any development of the riverside on the eastern side of the bridge. The second railway crosses the river from the north and sweeps, by an ugly viaduct, between the closely confined riverside gardens on the one side and the most congested built-up area of the town on the other, to within a short distance of the Castle walls. This railway also has extensive goods yards near the river which effectively limit development on the western side of the bridge.

This, incidentally, is an instance where boys have more scope for planning than professional town planners could allow themselves. Any drastic alteration of the railways is not an immediate practical possibility and therefore the professional could hardly concern himself with it. But it is feasible to envisage developments in the next twenty or thirty years which will make it unnecessary for Windsor to have two railways and two stations and so, by sweeping one railway out of the way, open up the prospect of a co-ordinated scheme of riverside development. This is what the boys have done, and it revolutionises the planning of a section of the town.

This illustrates the kind of question which the boys have faced in their researches and discussions. The scope of our work has expanded constantly. We traced the development of Windsor through the centuries and tried to understand the factors that determined that development. We have carried out a more and more detailed and extensive survey of the town—housing, road and traffic problems, education, health and other social services, business, open spaces, public utilities, local government, even—we hesitate to add—the public houses in which Windsor abounds.

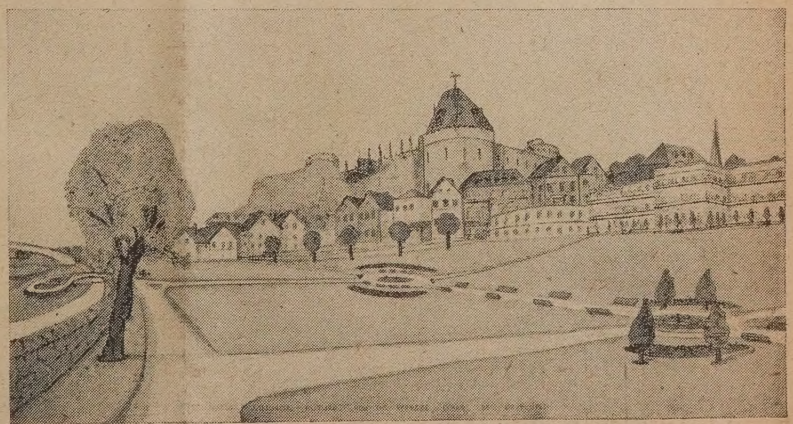
All this has led to a discussion of the future. What shall be Windsor's relationship to the Castle? What are the best lines on which to develop the tourist industry? How can we popularise Windsor without vulgarising it? How can we make full use of Windsor's natural asset in the riverside? What shall be Windsor's relationship with the industrial community of Slough just across the river? Can the buildings of the Imperial Service College, purchased by the town during the war, be adapted for use as a civic and social centre? Should a youth centre be closely associated with the centre of adult activities or away from it? Can the ill-assorted collection of private and public building estates to the west of the town be co-ordinated into a "neighbourhood unit"? What kinds of houses shall be built in Windsor? What new schools do we need? Shall Windsor have industry of its own?

National Problems Raised

Many of these questions, of course, represent the local angle on national problems, so that all the time the boys are trying to find solutions for their local problems they are tackling problems of town and country planning on a national scale too. Discussions, debates, talks by the boys themselves, have served constantly to clarify the issues and to lead to decisions. Often, perhaps, the discussions have been more important than the decisions, but none the less the possibility that boys, with minds uninhibited by a multitude of practical obstacles, can make constructive contributions in local planning is not to be ruled out.

Some of the most useful of our meetings have been those to which experts came to answer our questions. We have found the borough officials most ready to give us information, and to help us with advice and encouragement, while outside speakers have often given us a new angle on some of our local problems.

These meetings and discussions would have had great value even had they produced no visible result in the form of maps and models



—and how the boys propose to solve it.

and plans. But, in fact, we have already produced one small exhibition in the summer of last year and are preparing for a more ambitious one this month. Maps and plans illustrating many aspects of planning in Windsor, past, present, and future, have been produced and we have more recently been engaged in making large size maps and models. The problem of obtaining suitable materials has been difficult, but as necessity is the mother of invention we have found ways to solve it.

The first project was to make a map of the present Windsor showing the distribution of houses and open spaces. For this we raided the School scenery store and utilised a large flat twelve feet by seven. The canvas was primed with a light grey powder paint and the map was drawn to a scale of five feet to the mile. The roads were painted white, the houses red, the gardens brown, and the open spaces green. This task occupied a number of boys for two months.

We then made another map of similar dimensions, but this time embodying our proposals for the re-planning of Windsor. To help in this task we borrowed plans from the borough engineer, showing proposed new council estates, and plans from the local private builder showing his approved building schemes, and to these we added our own ideas. Explanatory labels were glued on to the map. This project has taken two months to reach its present state, but it is still far from complete, as we continue to add or subtract new schemes as they present themselves.

A Civic Centre Model

Another interesting project was the making of a model of the proposed civic and social centre. This was built on a base board six feet by four and, as it was impossible to obtain plywood, we improvised with a black-out screen covered with a stout canvas paper.

Again using black-out screens, a number of boys have worked in groups painting large views of Windsor, six feet by four, showing both good and bad features of the town and illustrating, by further paintings and drawings, how improvements could be made.

We have, of course, evoked criticism. Criticism is the discipline of town-planners and it is not a bad thing that boys should realise that town-planning is not just a pleasant hobby, but a campaign against the interests that for one reason and another oppose change. There was the gentleman who resented our condemnation of Windsor's schools. There was the eminent person who regarded the spectacle of boys "snooping round houses" as "dangerous." And, lastly, there was the indignant correspondent in the local paper who asked, in terms that should—we suppose—have recoiled upon our own heads, what was wrong with the history teaching of a school where boys were taught to *meddle* with an historic town like Windsor!

School "Civics" Creates Confident and Open-minded Citizens

By W. L. MARSLAND, Headmaster, St. Mary's Road Central School, Manchester

WE started the study of civics in this school in 1940, soon after the return of the children from evacuation, at which date I became headmaster. The opportunity to introduce the subject came when it was decided to set up an alternative course for those who drop a second language at the end of the second year. At present it is taken by only half of the children in the third and fourth years, but eventually we expect to make it part of the curriculum for all pupils after the age of 13; we think that children below that age are too immature for the study.

While the class is composed mainly of those who are poor at languages, it is not entirely so, several of our best pupils having exercised their right of choice to take civics for its own sake. We were fortunate to have on the staff in 1940 a teacher who had taken a course in Civics, and together we worked out our first tentative syllabus. The present one represents the accumulated ideas of four teachers, and it may be modified again at the end of this school year, as we gain knowledge and experience.

Essential Part of Education

We prefer the title "civics" to "citizenship," because we regard the latter as referring to our life in the community, whereas the former means the study of the why and wherefore, the history of the growth of our institutions and constitution—in which it links up with history—and of our place as a nation in the political and economic life of the world, in which it links up with both history and geography. We do not think of Civics as a separate school "subject"; all subjects interlock to a greater or less degree. But we do consider that there is a body of knowledge that can be taken and studied as a unit, and that is what we try to make the basis of our civics scheme. We believe more firmly than we did when we started that this knowledge should form part of the education of all future citizens.

The aims of the course are:

1. To teach democratic values;
2. To develop pride in democratic achievement;
3. To lay emphasis on the spirit of democratic institutions.

Actually, it is quite late in the course—more than half way through the second year—before we really discuss democracy. The method we have tried (we are really only in the "trying-out" stage) is to ask the pupils for their ideas on what democracy means, and then to amplify, clarify and develop them.

The scheme starts with the school—who owns it, pays for books, etc., engages and pays the teachers, and so on. This leads to transport, roads, lighting, and all the other amenities of life provided by the municipality, and thus brings us to a study of local government, with comparisons between big borough councils and small urban district councils. At the same time, we talk about the neighbourhood of the school and of the children's homes—the industries and amenities (or lack of them), and do some comparative housing studies.

Reference to how the home is run, and where the money comes from produces (a) an idea of making and keeping to a budget, and (b) conditions of employment, leading to an elementary study of trades unions and federations of employers; the Co-operative Movement; small traders or multiple stores; and so on, with some very elementary economics.

From local to national government, and the place of the citizen in the State, is really only a widening of the sphere of interest, bringing in the history, method of election, and mode of functioning of Parliament, with reference to party government. The various ministries can be regarded as magnifications of the municipal departments. It is at about this stage that we start to study White Papers, Bills before Parliament and such matters, leading in turn to the administration of the law, and the courts for that purpose.

International Understanding

A fuller review of trade unions, social insurance, pensions, etc., rounds off the work, and the course closes with a short study, linked, as already indicated, with the history and geography lessons, on the place of the citizen in the Empire and the world.

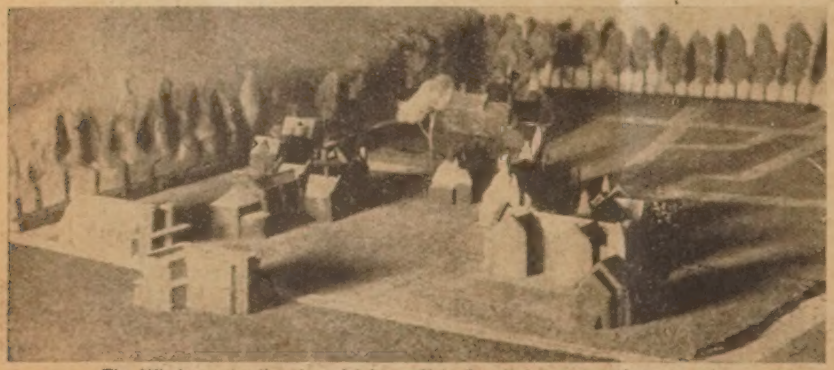
In peace-time we believe that the best way of teaching internationalism will be through youth camps in the various countries. Radio and the cinema, too, are useful media in international understanding, and so are addresses, in school, by visitors, especially those from overseas.

Part of the work is done by direct teaching, and part by the reading of the various text-books we have obtained. We bought only a dozen of each title to begin with, so that we might have a wide range of books, making it possible for the pupils to be taught to "dig out" and compare information from several sources. They are not good at this yet—we think they are rather young for this kind of work—but we do think we see an improvement.

Discussions and Debates

A fair amount of time is taken up by class discussions; symposia, formal debates, lecturettes (about three to five minutes usually), and discussions of material brought for the press cuttings album, as well as by discussions on Government White Papers, etc., when these deal with subjects the children can understand. Several profitable weeks were spent on Beveridge, for instance, and out of them came a debate on the motion "That family allowances should be paid in kind and not in cash."

This debate provided an interesting lesson. To our surprise no one wanted to speak for cash allowances, so I agreed to open for the opposition, my seconder being a waverer between both principles. Deliberately I used all the experience in debate I had, and the result was that the motion was defeated. A day or two later several of the class (second year) went, unprompted, to the teacher to ask how I had "managed to make them vote the opposite way from what they had intended," and the way was opened for a lesson on the danger of demagogy. It is pleasant to record



The Windsor schoolboys' model for a Civic Centre in process of construction.

that I have since found it very hard to repeat this "leading up the garden path."

All class activities are controlled by the class committee, which is elected by the class as part of its training. This committee selects the programme (asking for help when it gets stuck), and generally "runs" the lesson. The children are formally moved and seconded to the chair for these meetings, and all must take a turn; so, too, all take turns in proposing and seconding votes of thanks.

The teacher is just one of the class until the end, when there may be a talk on points of procedure, matters of fact, better presentation, and so on. I usually attend by invitation. If I "drop in," I may be asked to speak, or I may not. The committee is responsible to the class, and once the class formally passed a vote of censure on the committee, which resigned and was replaced by a new one.

The following list gives some of the subjects discussed or debated (discussions are preferred to debates, since members can speak more than once; formal debates are held occasionally, however, for their training in the discipline of debating):

"That local councillors should be paid loss of wages, and that council and other meetings be held out of normal working hours" (easily carried);

"That the public schools should be abolished" (easily carried);

"Absenteeism in industry" (definitely condemned);

Symposia on "What education should contain"; "My ideal house"; "The ideal school"; and similar subjects; and

A Discussion on Electoral Reform, arising out of a series of lessons on the history and development of the suffrage.

Newspaper lessons have been an attempt to show how different newspapers treat big issues, such as the coal report, or the general election, according to their political bias, and to get at the approximate truth from them all. We have found this difficult—perhaps the children are young for it—but we hope to evolve some technique for doing it, as we regard it as an important part of the work.

Visit to Council Meeting

The practical work has consisted of a visit to a meeting of the city council, visits to exhibitions, a mock trial (a serious one), a mock election, elections of class committees and of the chairmen for the various meetings, occasional brains trusts (when other than civics topics could be introduced), and an after-school club, which was addressed by representatives from all the chief corporation departments, who explained how their departments worked, future plans, and so on. The club has held 14 meetings and created much interest. In addition, the class was addressed in school time by two members of the council who were approached on her own initiative by one of the girls.

In our opinion the children have gained chiefly in the following ways:

They have learned to speak before others with confidence (towards the end of the course there are few "silent members," and hardly ever a boy);

They have gone a long way to relevance in discussion and in finding flaws in arguments;

They are learning to form their own judgments, and not to vote the way their friends do;

They are learning not to be so fixed to an idea that they cannot be converted to another one;

They have learned to ask questions to the point (when visitors address the school and ask for questions, it is usually fairly easy to "spot" the "civics" questioners).

In short, they are becoming confident of themselves, critical of argument, and unself-conscious. Best of all, this year's leavers are seeking means to keep civics going through their youth centre.

The Relieving Officer Looks to the Future

From a Correspondent

SINCE the relieving officer, although not mentioned in the Government's social insurance plan, has been assisting the needy for 340 years, I thought that his views on the transfer of his functions from the local authority to the State might be worth hearing. A plate outside his office door gave me his private address, and I went along.

"Are you often called out after office hours?" I asked.

"Not so often as before the war," he answered, "since people are generally better off. But, as a condition of living off my district, I am required to be on the phone at home—and I may be called away from my Christmas dinner by police or doctor should an ambulance or medical attention be needed."

"How are you responsible after office hours?" I inquired. "By section 17 of the Poor Law Act, which puts on me the onus of relieving want in a case of sudden or urgent necessity. Once, when a relieving officer did not provide medical attention through the district doctor and the sick person died, he was charged with manslaughter."

National Assistance Snags

"How will the public fare under the new plan of national assistance under the Government?" was my next question.

"So far," he replied, "no particular officer has been mentioned as the one to be shot at for failure to relieve destitution. Those who qualify for social insurance will be straight cases. The snags will crop up in carrying through national assistance."

"What kind of applications are likely to be made for national assistance?"

"Many examples might be given. Say a man draws his social insurance benefit but loses the money on the way home, or goes off with his week's wages to an unknown address, or fails to pay under a court order for maintenance of his wife and children, or is an army deserter whose allowance book has been called in by the regimental paymaster. . . In each case his wife and children may be left destitute. The relieving officer has been dealing with urgent problems like these for years."

New Outlook Needed

"But won't the Government national assistance office be able to deal justly and adequately with such urgent problems?"

"Not unless it undergoes a marked change of outlook. Officials in Government departments appear to dislike making clear-cut decisions or taking responsibility. But most problems of destitution need quick decisions; they cannot be sent from office to office, marked 'Passed to you, please.' The Relieving Officer can't pass the buck. He must be understanding, tactful, and sympathetic, while also firm and just. Hence the importance of specifying who is to be the person for these decisions of relieving destitution."

"If national assistance will absorb much of the work you have been doing for so many years, would not your experience be valuable under the Government scheme?" I put in.

"One would have imagined so," he replied. "Hitherto, local assistance, through the relieving officer, has made good the inadequacy of health insurance benefit, disability pensions, superannuation, workmen's compensation, short wages, separation orders—to mention a few only. National assistance will still have to plug the gaps in the social insurance scheme."

"Haven't you duties to carry out under the Lunacy Act as well?" "Yes, responsible duties, calling for instant decision. Where the relieving officer judges that a person of unsound mind is not in proper care and is a danger to himself or the public, he must have him put in a place of safety."

"Do you agree with the merging of powers under one authority?"

"Yes, because it will save the public much travelling from pillar to post. If a man is sick, receiving only health insurance benefit for himself (not allowed for wife and children), he is visited by the approved society's sick visitor, and is paid out by the agent. He applies to me to supplement his sick pay and is visited in his home. Under national assistance, he will make only one application and have only one visitor to his home."

"How do you interpret the intention of the Government to open a network of local offices?"

"I hope it will understand the phrase more liberally than hitherto. While it has been the custom for local assistance to increase the number of offices so that people could apply near their homes, the Government has closed outlying offices of the Assistance Board, thus making applicants travel further. In one city I know, there are 27 local offices compared with only four Assistance Board offices."

"But doesn't the Assistance Board deal with many applications through the post, and pay out through post offices?"

"Yes, and taking the cue from the relieving officer, it can issue food tickets to meet urgent need. But, even in these days of higher education, quite a number of people cannot write, and more cannot put together a coherent tale of their misfortunes. There must be many local offices where destitution can be relieved; it is often so urgent that it cannot wait on the post."

More Bureaucracy Danger

"Won't national assistance involve putting more power in the hands of State officials?"

"Yes—and little has been said about this further step in bureaucracy. As a relieving officer, I am an official under the local council. But if any applicant considers that I have not given him a square deal, he can complain to a locally-elected councillor who can get the matter ventilated. Compare this with the position of the aggrieved applicant for national assistance, whose only remedy will be to get his M.P. to bring the matter up in the House."

"Now, doesn't the Ministry lay much stress on the welfare nature of the social services, and haven't you done a lot here?"

"Relieving officers do many things that are not written in books of instructions. I have borrowed a water bed from a hospital for a man who had been bedfast for more than a year. Finding, in a cottage bedroom, a bucket, a pudding basin, two jampots, and a flower bowl, all catching the rain dripping through the roof, and a sick woman's bed pushed into a corner to escape the waterfalls, I have called on the landlord who continued to collect the rent and got the roof repaired. I have obtained from a laundry replacement of the lost washing of a bedfast widow with a mentally defective son. I have obtained glasses for a supplementary pensioner who had been saving all her threepenny bits to buy some, because she cannot see to read or sew. Long before the Citizens' Advice Bureaux came along, my office was the resort of scores of people with personal problems, and even now, when the pensioners are being paid through the Assistance Board, they still come to me to answer their questions and give them advice. It is essential that the relieving officer should be approachable; he can often carry out the boy scout's motto, "One good deed a day," and it is ample reward for social service if he gets a heartfelt "God bless you."

A Practical Plan for Post-Entry Training

By R. PEIRSON

WHILE appreciation of the value of post-entry training and pressure for its institution has come largely from local government officers rather than from local authorities, its object is better organisation—more efficient administration—which will benefit the employer. It is, therefore, primarily the employer's duty to provide it. But he cannot carry out his responsibility with success unless he has the willing co-operation of the staff. To secure that co-operation, he must satisfy his employees that the training will benefit them as well as the service. A trained staff is more valuable than an untrained staff; but it is the staff which is called upon for additional and sustained effort, and, quite properly, the staff will look for some reward. If the staff see that training leads to better conditions of service, they will train willingly. If the training is imposed on them merely as extra duty, they cannot be expected to show enthusiasm. Imposed training—training without better conditions—will, in the long run, benefit neither employer nor employed.

Staff training, then, cannot be considered apart from other conditions of service. It must be linked to a sense of justice as well as to pride of service. The staff must be assured that such things as salary scales, prospects, and (most important) *methods* of recruitment and promotion will be fair and adequate.

Training may be divided into three parts: at the desk or bench; in the school or study; by comparative experience in some related organisation. All these will be part of the good training scheme, and all must have a bearing both on efficient organisation and individual success.

Training "at the desk" must be adaptable to circumstances, but there are a few essentials. Unless allowance is made for the time it occupies, either the training or the work will suffer. The enthusiasm of both trainer and trained should be aroused. Careful selection of trainers and training posts is necessary. One of the aims should be the widest possible experience for the trainee; he should not stay too long at one job in his early years. On entering the service he should be welcomed and given a bird's eye view, showing the relation of departments and the general structure of the service, by a competent senior officer. On allocation to a department, a similar welcome should be given, with a panorama of departmental organisation. The tyro should then be introduced to the officer responsible for his training and be led to regard him as a friend and adviser. Then begins initiation into the machinery of administration. Before long he should attend council and committee meetings and visit those departments, sections, or outlying establishments upon which his work impinges. Agendas, reports, Hansard, professional periodicals and publications should be circulated or provided in a reading room and there should be a service and a departmental library. In fact, everything, should be done to whet the youngster's curiosity and to satisfy it.

Periodic reports on the junior's work should be made, specifying any particularly good piece of work, especially of originality or initiative. The reports should also refer to personal characteristics, and should be part of the basis of assessment for promotion. Training officers—who will also be reporting officers—must be carefully selected.

Most local authorities are in close contact with the education service and should call upon that service to provide and organise the academic training of junior officers. Smaller authorities should combine, to ensure sufficiency and efficiency of teaching staff. In London, it would be desirable to combine the academic training of all local government staffs with, possibly, the relevant civil service staffs. The curriculum of the training school or institute should be designed, first for the study of government administration, with particular reference to local government; second for training in the technical and other subjects required in local government departments; third, for the social integration and general appreciation and comradeship between members of the various services. Provision should also be made for refresher courses. Attendance should be compulsory in the employer's time during the first year or two and voluntary and partly in the employer's time for the next few years.

It is undesirable to lay down too strictly in advance the full curriculum of such a study centre. Its structure and aims should be elastic. It should develop on democratic lines and should respond to the needs and demands of the students under the guidance of the principal and of establishment officers. Again, periodic reports should be made and should become part of the basis of assessment for promotion.

The third phase of the training scheme must come from the local authorities. They should inaugurate interchange of visits, both social and educational, between their staffs and consider a system of secondment from one staff to another for purposes of study and experience. There should be scholarships from the school or institute to the universities, with leave of absence for the successful for the necessary period of residence. Staff organisations and authorities should combine to urge universities to place the administrative profession on a par with the other professions in the matter of degrees. We should be done with the notion that any Tom, Dick, or Harry can tumble into administration and insist upon recognised qualification in administration, as such, as the only way to advancement in the administrative sphere.

Our civil service is world famous for its integrity and impartiality, which are largely due to the competitive entrance examination, and I am perturbed when I hear suggestions for improving the service by other means of entrance. Local government staff organisations should insist upon competitive examination as the sole means of entrance to the service. But the passing of academic examinations is not enough. The apprentice must learn the mysteries of his craft; the scholar has to be trained to apply his knowledge. The Major-General in the "Pirates of Penzance" was aware of the position in a Gilbertian way:—

He was very well acquainted with all matters mathematical,
He understood equations, both the simple and quadratical;
He could also write a washing bill in Babylonian cuneiform
And tell you all the details of Caractacus's uniform.

But,

When he had learnt what progress had been made in modern gunnery,
When he knew more of tactics than a novice in a nunnery;
In short, when he'd a smattering of elementary strategy,
He'd be a better Major-General.

Wanted — A Special Qualification for Administrators

By W. A. ADKINS (East Ham Branch)

THE general trend towards a higher educational standard will have its repercussions on all walks of life, and especially local government. Side by side with this, the new Burnham scale of salaries for school-teachers has led municipal officers to seek a similar scale and the recognition of the service as a profession.

This standard cannot, however, be achieved until we can produce evidence of an accepted and adequate form of training, post-entry or pre-entry—training as a local government officer and not in another profession retaining its own professional status. The present distinction between the "professional" man and the "layman" in local government must be made less sharp. As a rule, the professional man entering local government remains a solicitor, an accountant, an engineer, or a doctor. I suggest that the time is ripe to seek a status for local government which will make him as proud to be called a local government officer as he is now to be called a solicitor or an engineer. Local government during the past six years has contributed so much to the national welfare that all officers must feel proud to belong to a service, which, with all its shortcomings, can reach such heights.

The training and qualification required must, I suggest, follow the accepted educational system and must reach the highest standards. At present, training is largely confined to the professional examinations—a surprising restriction when it is considered that the professional class forms a small proportion of the whole service and that the Hadow Committee and other authorities have laid great emphasis on the importance of the administrator. The NALGO, Chartered Institute of Secretaries, and similar examinations, even the University Diploma in Public Administration, excellent as they are, do not cover sufficient ground nor set a sufficiently high standard. The aim should be to secure an examination covering the widest possible field and of such a standard that it will be accepted as a qualification of first-class ability.

What is needed, I suggest, is an examination of university degree standard—a degree which will be accepted as a specific qualification in local government administration and be available to both internal and external students.

The nearest approach to such a qualification today is the Diploma in Public Administration; but, although its syllabus covers most of the subjects necessary, the examination does not carry sufficient weight.

I suggest, therefore, that NALGO, through the National Whitley Council, should press for the establishment in one or more universities of a chair in Public Administration and of a degree combining the educational standard of a university degree with the specific training essential for public administration.

Many harsh things have been said of the examination fetish, and many will contend that the successful administrator is born, not made, and that success must be achieved through long experience in the job itself. Nevertheless, an examination is, and always must be, the yardstick by which ability can be measured, and, this being the case, the higher the qualification the greater must be the sense of achievement.

In saying this, I am not arguing for the privileged entry of university graduates into the local government service. The scheme would, however, attract the best type of brains to the service. Nor do I suggest that the proposed degree should replace the professional examinations; education for the degree could proceed side by side with training for a professional qualification and could, no doubt, be accepted as part of the training required for the various professions; the professional societies might be consulted on this point.

NALGO is now strong enough to sponsor such a scheme and, if it succeeded, could go further by financing exhibitions or scholarships at the universities to attract the best students.

The Small Branch, too, Can Stage a Big Exhibition

By A. HATT, Clerk to Billericay U.D.C.

We have reported many impressive local government exhibitions arranged by the bigger local authorities, such as Coventry and Manchester. But, given enthusiasm and co-operation, the small authority, too, can provide an equally effective display—as is shown by this article describing the splendid exhibition held at Billericay in August.

THE Billericay urban district presents special problems for local government. A mainly rural area of 30,000 acres, roughly square in shape, with a population of 36,000, it contains four towns, Billericay, Laindon, Pitsea, and Wickford, one in each corner of the square. There is no central site from which the district could be governed and the municipal offices at Billericay are six to seven miles from two of the towns and three miles from the third—with the result that three-fourths of the inhabitants are governed from a distance.

Wishing to foster a keener civic spirit among the inhabitants, and to make them feel that the local authority was interested in the welfare of all citizens, Billericay branch—which has 60 members, practically the entire official staff of the council—was keen to organise a local government exhibition. It asked the council, with which its relations are excellent, if it would co-operate. The council replied by voting £250 for an exhibition to be held for one week at Billericay and for another week at Pitsea, and by entrusting all arrangements to the local joint staff committee.

In organising the exhibition the council and the branch worked as a team. The co-operation of the Essex County Council was sought and secured to the full, so that the exhibition became a joint affair of wide appeal, most of the urban and county council departments providing their own sections. The difficulty of co-operation with so many county council officials was overcome by the county appointing its medical officer of health as liaison officer, and the latter kept the county council's efforts co-ordinated with those of the urban council by contact with the Billericay branch public relations officer and the clerk of the urban council.

The display occupied the whole of a modern school (unused during the summer holidays), filling the school hall and fourteen class-rooms. In the main hall were staged the N A L G O screens, together with two screens of posters prepared by the urban council accountant and five screens of posters prepared by the clerk to the council. Much time and thought were given to these posters, which dealt pictorially and humorously with rates and expenditure; what life would be like without local government; the duties and privileges of citizens, councillors, and officers and the relationship between them; the value of an informed public opinion; and the need for co-operation of all parties in local government. Practical examples of the council's working were shown in the form of correspondence, records of meetings and decisions, and the many types of records, licences, minutes, bye-laws, and similar material in daily use.

Departmental displays, shown in the class-rooms, included:

SURVEYOR'S (two rooms). Plans and models of proposed works, with emphasis on sites and plans for houses; photographs of temporary houses, then being built; town planning maps and other surveys; proposals for roads, works, recreation grounds, etc., and maps and pictures illustrating the need for planning and the proposals of the Greater London Plan (loaned by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning). In addition, the County of London Electric Supply Co. and the Gas Light and Coke Co. displayed their post-war fitments likely to be installed in new houses. These were a great success, industrialists coming from many distant places to see them.

HEALTH (county and urban, including the public assistance department and school medical service, also in two rooms). Charts, posters, dental chairs, dolls, artificial teeth and practical demonstrations illustrating the machinery of the local government health services, the work done by the departments, and its results.

EDUCATION (county). Two rooms of exhibits explaining the educational system, and showing the work performed at all types of schools and colleges, as well as the work produced by the scholars (children and adults).

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (county). Display of standard weights and measures and demonstrations of analysis of foodstuffs, testing of milk, etc., showing how this little-known department protects the public.

SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE (county). Sixty feet of photographs of the work of the school.

RECORDS (urban council). Ancient documents, records, photographs, Roman coins, maps, rate books and the like, all bearing on the local government of the district.

In addition, a working model of a sewerage works, borrowed from the Science Museum, was on show. The Ministry of Food had a room of displays with frequent cooking demonstrations, and space was allotted for the National Savings Movement.

Lack of materials called for much improvisation, but school-desks, solid blackouts, and black-out curtains all proved useful for display and covering purposes and wholehearted co-operation between the branch, the urban council, and the county council overcame most difficulties.

Apart from the exhibition itself, the following were important features:

Refreshments were provided for visitors;

Film shows were given twice daily, and lectures were held each evening, the subjects including local government, the health services, town planning, feeding the family, the State and education, and 2,000 years of government in Billericay.

A Brains Trust, with oral questions allowed, was held at the final session each week and proved an overwhelming success.

Reception arrangements were in the hands of one councillor and one officer, acting jointly each day. Parties from local organisations, Army and Air Force units and of representatives of other local authorities were conducted round by selected officials; and

Music was relayed throughout the exhibition and the loudspeakers were used to give announcements.

Representatives of all neighbouring authorities attended and correspondence was received from as far away as Newcastle-on-Tyne as to the nature and success of the exhibition. Nearly six thousand people visited the exhibition—one-third of the total population of the two towns—and there have been many expressions of regret from those who could not attend.

Practical results have been:

A greater spirit of co-operation between the county and urban councils; a much keener interest in local government by the inhabitants (some have written to the clerk asking how to become councillors);

The possibility of neighbouring authorities putting on similar exhibitions;

Requests for loan of books on local government from interested persons; and

Requests for members and officials to give series of lectures, including one course at an R.A.F. station.

In addition there is the possibility of one town in the Urban District having its own municipal sub-office as a direct result of opinions expressed at the exhibition.

The exhibition is to be repeated next Spring, when it will be shown for a week at each of the other two towns in the district, Wickford and Laindon.

Let Us Make Health, Home, Happiness, The Heritage of All!

By C. G. CARTWRIGHT, Chief Clerk, Health Dept., Hampshire C.C.

ALL concerned with the administration of the existing health services are anxiously awaiting the Government's Bill to set up a national health service. All administrators of our present permissive legislation will agree that—provided too much ground is not lost to pressure by the British Medical Association—the scheme as outlined in the White Paper is a step in the right direction, and, when perfected, should make Health, Home, and Happiness the heritage of all.

Let us examine these three "H's." As the pioneers of the Peckham Health Centre demonstrated, a large proportion of our fellow citizens do not enjoy good health. Useful citizenship is the key to national existence and survival—but you cannot be a useful citizen unless you are first a healthy citizen.

Many other evils will have to be removed before all can have an equal chance, but here also the Government has indicated its willingness to tackle these problems. The schemes for health, education, social insurance, water supply, town planning, milk and, of great importance, housing, must be viewed together, for each is an integral part of the reconstruction of a national life to be enjoyed by all and not by the privileged few.

Good health is important to the individual, to the family, and to the community. Today, much is being done to achieve it, but much more remains to be done. Any worker in the public health service could cite case after case to illustrate existing gaps in the necessary provision. Almost every one reflects in some measure on environmental conditions—my second "H," Home.

"The unit of health is the family," the Peckham Health Centre organisers concluded early in their researches, and public health work fully justifies the conclusion. The importance of facilities being available through the same schemes for babies, toddlers, and school children is recognized throughout the service.

Child guidance has been adopted by many authorities permanently after a long run assisting in evacuation problems. But its practitioners recognize that parental guidance and a stable home life is essential to successful treatment.

Much has and is being done to enlighten the community in matters of health and sex. But the valuable films and talks provided too often reach only the converted. The best education in health and sex can be given only in and through the home.

The war has made frightening inroads into family life. Broken homes are far too numerous and the housing situation in many parts of the country appalling. Family life, home life, must be a basic principle of national life. Health and home are inseparable from my third "H," Happiness.

Health, Home, and Happiness can and should go together. How can we achieve this end?

Of first importance is health, positive health. To ensure this we must have a truly *National* health service, providing the same benefits for all, regardless of the wealth or poverty of the area in which they live. But, while national in standard, it must be local in administration. The planners must listen to the men and women on the spot. The service must be elastic to meet all needs. Parochialism must vanish. Grants must be based on the needs of the providing authorities.

No more permissive legislation: "shall," please, not "may." Let there be a strong link between health services and industrial medicine. Let the public health departments be removed from the back streets and dingy buildings. Our centres must be attractive, inviting, premises, our medical officers, specialists, dental surgeons, and nurses given reasonable time and the finest equipment for their work, and let great efforts be made to educate parents and children.

The local government service, which will have to carry out all these new plans, must advertise itself so that it is no longer at the mercy of the uninformed. We need public relations as advocated by N A L G O, together with greater scope for interchange of ideas between authorities, and when staffing difficulties are reduced, interchanges of staff.

N A L G O has done much to improve the terms and conditions of local government officers, and has recognized the need for good administration, but has it stressed sufficiently that we are servants of the public?

As public servants let us, by our continued efforts, by efficient organization, by our attitude towards the public, help and guide them towards attaining maximum benefits from these plans.

A big job? Of course it is, but look at the record of the local government service in war time, and the tasks it has performed. With the help of our gallant Service colleagues, now coming back to us, it will give us something to work on, something worth achieving to the glory of the Service and in memory of those who fought and died that we might live.

More Politics, Better Councillors, Public Relations will Combat Apathy

By TERENCE F. USHER

"THE *Blanktown estate committee have refused an application by the local Youth Council to use the council chamber for a mock parliament "because they wish to preserve the dignity of the council chamber and think that anything in the nature of politics should be kept out . . .*"

"*We have decided . . . as a result of damage caused by irresponsible citizens to the park amenities . . . that as soon as railings are available again, they shall be replaced round our parks . . .*"

"*The city of X has just completed its first hundred temporary houses . . . they were ready for occupation yesterday, when a gang of youths broke every window, eight hundred panes in all. The replacement of these windows will postpone the occupation of these houses by several weeks . . .*"

How often do we read in the local papers paragraphs like these—all published recently? Commenting on the last, the "Manchester Guardian" writes: "Chasing people away when they have already started their attack is only a makeshift defence against their irresponsibility. This question . . . is a matter for public conscience and a sense of communal property."

"Public conscience" . . . "sense of communal property" . . . "preserve dignity of council chamber" . . . "politics should be kept out" . . .

But politics is not a matter for the specialist; it is not undignified; it need not be "a dirty game." Politics and local government are inseparable, being the sum total of our daily communal life. The fiction that "local government is non-political" is dead.

Local government, like national government, must, in a democracy, be run on a political basis, and the sooner that is admitted the better for everyone concerned. The local government officer should be free to take an open part in politics, to join a political party, and to exercise his political rights. He should be free to advocate, in public, principles which he believes are essential to the proper government of his city, even if those principles are a part of the programme of a particular political party. He should be free to do all this—with the all-important proviso that he must carry out to the best of his ability and with enthusiasm and diligence the policy agreed upon by his democratically elected council, whether that policy is or is not one which he himself advocates.

The citizen, too, should be made to realise that politics play an essential part in the government of his city; for public apathy towards, and lack of knowledge of, the way in which local government works has three damaging repercussions upon the work of the local authority:

1. A low poll and uninformed vote, together with a generally cynical attitude towards our system of local democracy;
2. Resentment of present rate levels and opposition to rate increases, irrespective of the benefits they provide; and
3. Indifference to the preservation of our public amenities and (in its worst form) deliberate destruction of public property.

Only a long-term policy of education—in which adult education is as important as the guidance of the child—plus the election of public representatives who represent no private interest and have only the welfare of the community at heart, can arouse public interest in our system of democratic public control and our executive instruments of civil service and municipal authorities. In the continuance of the present public attitude there lies not only the immediate danger of apathy and non-cooperation, but the even greater danger of the loss of our democratic system. Before the war, disgust with "democracy on paper" showed itself on the Continent in the rise of Fascism and dictatorship, and, to a lesser degree, in Britain in the considerable following of Sir Oswald Mosley and his Blackshirts. We have fought this terrible war to maintain our democratic institutions, and it is now time to make those institutions a reality.

The danger of this drift towards authoritarian government is not ended. Should the conditions of the between-war years, in which there was little contact between "authority" and "people," be repeated, we shall see Fascism rising again—not under that name, of course, but under the guise of patriotic nationalism, such as is always adopted by reactionary forces to cloak their real aims.

What is to be done about it? First, we must ensure that the right type of man is elected to our councils, and that his policy is one approved by the citizens who elected h m

Second, we should press for the payment of councillors on the same principles as the payment of Members of Parliament. So long as councillors are required to attend meetings of council and committees and to conduct the whole-time business of a local government representative at their own expense, so long shall we fail to secure the services of young, enthusiastic and idealistic men, independent of outside influence and able to rejuvenate and inspire the local authorities.

Third, we must establish a channel of contact between the electorate and the machine of government. M.P.s and, to a lesser degree, councillors, are apt to be active in the community immediately before an election, but in the months and years which follow are all too often swallowed up in the comparative obscurity of the House of Commons and the local council. But it will not be enough for them merely to maintain better contact with public opinion. The electorate itself must be educated. Today, it is lamentably ignorant on matters of public policy, and is thus likely to press for things which greater knowledge would show to be contrary to its best interests.

These conditions, forming a vicious circle of cause and effect, are to be found in their most aggravated form in the larger towns, where populations are large, the machinery of local government complex, and rates high. Here we have a great number of apathetic or dissatisfied electors, a big council, and a formidable list of local government officers; the task of making a working unity of this trinity seems to be no one's responsibility. Were the recommendations of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee's Report on Relations between Local Government and the Community to be closely studied by councils and staffs in these towns, and *acted upon* in accordance with local needs, the position would quickly change.

These opinions may horrify or offend many people in local government whose attitude is "all's well in this, the best of all possible worlds." But the state of the world, of our own country, and of local government, do not permit us to be complacent. Any welfare worker in a large community will tell of families who have lost their self-respect and their respect for "authority" because there is no effective contact between authority and the community. "It's no use asking THEM. THEY won't do anything for us. THEY don't care what happens as long as THEY get their rent, rates, and taxes." In that one word—"THEY"—can be summed up the result of years of lack of this all-important contact. On the day when the ordinary citizen ceases to speak of "THEY" and begins to talk of what "WE" intend to do in "OUR" city, we may sit back and pause for breath.

Hunger, Hardship, Noise and Nazis Did Not Deter NALGO Prisoner Students

By KENNETH S. CARTER (Glamorgan C. C. Branch)

AN ex-prisoner-of-war tends to review his past experiences in the light of his present freedom, and any description of his life as a prisoner necessarily suffers from a personal bias. What follows is a sincere attempt to describe the development of the NALGO study group in Stalag Luft III, in Upper Silesia.

Most student prisoners will agree that food, clothing, accommodation and news of home took procedure over studies. No man can work effectively when he is constantly hungry; when he is cold from lack of clothing or absence of fuel; when his billet is so ill-lighted that, by day as well as night, reading is impossible; or when he has had bad news or no news from home.

On top of these were many practical difficulties. In the early years, writing-paper, pencils, notebooks, and all the other tools of the student's craft were lacking, and the measure of a student's keenness was often the quantity of notes he had compiled on the back of cigarette cartons. As time went on, however, stationery and textbooks began to arrive from the Red Cross, Y.M.C.A., and similar organizations. There was also a steady increase in the number of examining bodies prepared to accept papers from prisoners.

All prisoners below commissioned rank were crowded into large rooms (tents at a later stage) in which they had to eat, sleep, wash and dry clothes, cook their meals (when Red Cross supplies were available) learn their musical instruments, read, and make cupboards, chairs, and other "gadgets"—all to the accompaniment of the gramophone through which, with monotonous reptition, Vera Lynn promised us "We'll meet again"!

As the last straw to break the student's resolution there was always the threat of intervention by our "hosts." From time to time rooms would be singled out, in unpredictable manner, for the attention of the "security staff." These "Ferrets," "Snoops" or "Moles," as they were called, took great pains to search for forbidden articles—fountain pens, maps, cigarettes over a certain number, tools, and so forth.

On the credit side there was much to be thankful for. It was in 1942 that study facilities were first provided. At first, informal meetings only were possible, and it was at one of these that the NALGO "Discussion Group" was formed. The Group met regularly each week throughout the summer. The only textbook available was circulated and the chapter for the week was discussed at the next meeting.

Soon after this, the camp education office, under W.O. E. Alderton, established contact with the Red Cross educational books section, and stationery, textbooks, and even exam. papers began to arrive. Classes were organized, and the NALGO Discussion Group became "NALGO" on the school time-tables, signifying "Classes for the NALGO Exams."

Several members had begun to study at other camps and their efforts began to bear fruit. W.O. R. A. C. Hooper (Bath) was the first to get textbooks and study material from the NALGO education department, and these he readily put at the disposal of the other members. Some months later, more supplies arrived from NALGO and the classes continued merrily on a co-operative basis. Towards the end of the year, members who had specialised in particular subjects, began not only to lead but to lecture. Outstanding examples were W.O. N. S. Fisher (Cheshire) on statistics, who faced at times a formidable, critical opposition, particularly from W.O. N. C. Bizley (Bristol), and W.O. E. W. Penn (Gloucestershire) who became a "genman" on economics. Characteristic of the study group as a whole was the support which each member gave whenever a specialised topic needed treatment. In this way, W.O. J. L. S. Flanagan (Leeds) took education; W.O. M. Kelly (St. Marylebone) public health and London government; W.O. R. Buckingham (Richmond, Surrey) office practice and committee work, while W.O. Farrow attended several meetings to answer questions on finance.

Studies proceeded in this way until the beginning of 1943, when a new and revised programme was drawn up. A regular series of tests was arranged and practice under examination conditions was given, although in restricted form on account of the demand for classroom accommodation. Then, in May, we learned that the camp was to be moved. Fortunately, the exam. papers arrived in time and it was just possible for the exam. to be taken.

The new camp was in East Prussia. There, the members of the Group began to work for the Final examination. Arrangements had been put in hand as early as the previous January so that books could be sent out, and work proceeded apace, but this time, owing to the disorganized state of the camp and to the great variation in subjects taken, study was on an individual basis. At the new camp, too, three candidates for the Intermediate Exam. came forward and were assisted by all in the light of their experience of the previous year. Messrs. Fisher, Penn, Carter, and Buckingham lectured. In addition, a correspondence course was organized for two men studying for the D.P.A. in another compound, with whom little personal contact was allowed.

As the day of the final Exam., 1944, drew near, the rapid approach of the Russian forces led to much speculation—"Which would be first—the Russians or the exam. papers?" Unfortunately the papers did not arrive. Nor did the Russians—for the camp was moved, in most trying circumstances, to various destinations.

Thereafter ensued a period of confusion with shortage of food, until the spring of this year, when the gates were opened and we became free.

WITH a liver that felt nailed to my ribs, I entered the Town Hall. The morning was sultry and I was in no mood for work. Inside my room, I took up the Time Book and hurled it out of the window—as a flying start for the day. Then I proceeded to leer at my staff, one by one, until they were all staring at me in terror. "Get-out-of-here-all-of-you," I hissed, "and come back to-morrow with your features altered. Get them lifted, dropped, or trod on, but bring them back in another form." And I jostled the lot of them out of the room.

Then I made my way upstairs to the eyrie of Miss Frorst, personal assistant to the borough treasurer. There the wretch sat, like a knitting needle by Epstein. Plucking the steel spectacles from her sharp-edged nose, I tossed them over my shoulder. "Lucky for you, Frorst," I informed her, "that I detached them first. I never could abide the things—or you either, for that matter. Now show me your tongue." Thinking me crazed, she jerked out a length of furred flesh. With a brushful of gloy I dabbed the twitching member. Frorst, finding the flavour distasteful, deemed it wise to leave her tongue out to weather while I was remarking that it should be petrified in view of the malice it had wrought.

I then sped downstairs. At the foot, T. H. Law, the town clerk, made to pass me. "Here, clerk," I shouted, grabbing his lapels, "you enjoy overmuch hearing yourself neverthelessing and this and that-ing everybody. You must be restrained." So, inserting a finger and thumb between his lips, I detached his upper dentures and flung them into a fire-bucket. He made to strike me, thought better of it, and hobbled away, babbling about someone going for the police. I *was* enjoying myself! Even if I lost my superannuation contributions, the morning had been worth the sacrifice.

The faint stench from a foul pipe came to my nostrils. The mayor is here, I told myself, and looked around to see His Worship standing by the hall door. "Look here, Mister Mayor," I admonished, going up to him with a wagging finger, "that pipe is a public nuisance." And, snatching the public nuisance from between his teeth, I flung it at Frorst, who was stilting down the staircase, her face split in a grimace.

"Why don't the police come?" shouted the town clerk from a safe distance. "Because they're as scared as you, old Nevertheless-and-Notwithstanding," I called back.

"Mayor, mount the stairs!" I commanded. Fearing the glaze on my eyes, the mayor mounted. Into his parlour we went, and forthwith I directed him to busy himself at removing the moth-balls from the robes of his fellow-councillors. After glancing at my wild eyes, he did as bid and had soon amassed a heap on the table. "Now pelt the passer-by with them," I instructed. As he appeared a little hesitant, I grasped the mace that was leaning in the corner and arced it about him fiercely. Whereat His Worship started dispensing his bounty with devilish energy.

Leaving this first citizen to complete his penance, I backed quietly through the doorway and bumped into Mr. Buntz, the borough treasurer, in so doing. The Old Man gasped. And he gasped again when I took him by the left ear and led him into his room.

"Now, Mr. Buntz," I said through shut teeth, "I am about to delineate your status as I see it. So far as concerns the circumstances of your birth——"

. . . . . .

"Oh, Mister Haywire, Mister Haywire!" came an angry voice. "How you do carry on! I can hear you downstairs. Bless us, I shall have all my lodgers leaving if you *will* sleep on your back!"

NALGO BUILDING SOCIETY

Mortgage Interest Reduced

The Committee of Management of the NALGO Building Society has decided to reduce the rate of interest on all new mortgages to 4 per cent immediately. This also applies to any advance already approved but not yet completed.

As from January 1 next, existing borrowers will be credited with a rebate of interest in order that their rate shall not exceed the rate for new mortgages—4 per cent. This credit will reduce the capital, thereby accelerating the repayment of the mortgage. The monthly repayment will remain unaltered.

AT RANDOM —— By "Hyperion"

Deus ex Machina

A Pensacola pilot was forced by engine trouble to bale out. He floated down towards a field, where an ancient, deaf, half-blind negro was hoeing potatoes. The old man, unaware of the crash, suddenly saw the apparition, canopied by a silken cloud, descending to earth. He dropped his hoe, and, with hallelujahs and every manifestation of reverence and joy, approached the field with: "Good-mornin', Lord Jesus, and how did you leave your Pa?"
—*T. W. Robertson Scott in "The Countryman."*

Testimonial

The new maid presented her reference to her employer. It read: "Miss So-and-so has an excellent appetite and sleeps well."

"We never get vans stolen now that the staff is back from the Forces."

Equality

"That Commandment was altered and improved until, instead of "All animals are equal," the words "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" were inscribed across the barn wall.—*George Orwell.*

Before the Elections

The present state of a councillor's soul is conditioned by the future state of his seat.

Cost of Living

The outcome of the income depends on the outgo for the upkeep.

Universities

Of course universities are full of knowledge. The freshmen bring a little in, the seniors take less away, and the knowledge accumulates.
—*H. Laurence Lowell.*

Age Tests

You know you're growing old—
At least, that's how I find it—
When you not only are
But also do not mind it.
—S. H. Dewhurst.

You're young if you like books, plays and films that make you cry; you're not so young if you like them to make you laugh. You're young if you first look at a man's eyes; you're less young if you look at his hands.

You're young if you want to be admired for your intelligence; you're not so young if you prefer compliments on your beauty.

You're young if you regret the time lost in sleep; you're less young if you think time spent sleeping is never lost.—*Key Digest.*

Brevities

Two faults debar a clerk from promotion—first, refusal to lick the boots of his superiors; second, refusal to clean his own.

Wives too readily adopt their husband's vices, without adopting their virtues—if any.

Though I realise, remarked the Optimist, that life is not worth living, I enjoy every minute of it.
—*Russell Green.*

Happiness

There is a flippant saying: "If you want to be happy for an hour, feast well; if you want to be happy for a day, get married; if you want to be happy for ever—become a gardener."
—*Brigidde Vine.*

Last Word in Sacrifice

Sir,—Why should we have to forgo our crossword puzzle because Hitler is dead? Give us back our crosswords.—*Letter in the Daily Mail.*

Vale

Louis B. Mayer, film magnate and horse fancier, has just cabled an offer of £50,000 for the British thoroughbred, Hyperion.—*News Item.*

Well, so long, folks!

"Have you any books for the newly-married? My husband is coming home after four years in the East!"

R.A.F. Learns Civics : Exhibition Booming : NALGO On The Air

AN excellent illustration of the way in which branches and members can help the public relations campaign reaches me from South Wales. Some weeks ago, the senior education officer at St. Athan R.A.F. station asked Headquarters for assistance with civic education under the Forces' E.V.T.—educational and vocational training—scheme. He was put in touch with W. G. DAVID, district public relations officer, and the NALGO district officer, who speedily arranged a course of lectures, delivered by chief officers from Cardiff, Swansea, and Glamorgan county, on the framework of local government, public health, education, electricity and water supply, roads, and municipal finance. Each lecture was attended by about 350 leaders of discussion groups, each of whom later used the knowledge he had gained to spread interest and enlightenment among the 15,000 men on the station.

That the scheme was of value is agreed by the lecturers—one of whom commented on the "most intelligent interest" taken—and by the R.A.F. authorities, who promptly asked for a further series, now in progress, on the work of sanitary, meat and foods, weights and measures, buildings, port health, and mental deficiency inspectors, libraries, and local taxation.

From Bombs to Babies

BUT the R.A.F. is evidently taking civics seriously. When, some months ago, it ordered 60 sets of the NALGO local government exhibition, the public relations department was appropriately jubilant. But that number altogether failed to satisfy the demand for the exhibition from stations and units all over the country. The Air Ministry tried to satisfy the clamour by ordering another 100 copies of each of the four diagrammatic screens. That, too, was not enough, and now it has shattered the calm of Abingdon Street by calling for a further 1,000 sets of the full exhibition! Nor has that calm returned, for the stairs and corridors leading to the public relations department echo daily to the tramp of a procession of R.A.F. and W.A.A.F officers (not to mention soldiers, A.T.S. and W.R.N.S.), all reporting an insatiable thirst for knowledge among their charges and seeking further help.

P.R. by the Small Authority

ANY idea that it is only the big local authorities which can go in for public relations in an ambitious way is effectively dispelled by the example of Minehead U.D.C. (population 6,300). Since January, A. G. MANSFIELD, the clerk to the council, tells me, he or his colleagues have given six talks on local government to such local groups as Toc H., Rotary, Girls' Training Corps, Women's Institute, and county school pupils, have welcomed elementary schoolchildren to a council meeting (first explaining the procedure and agenda to them), and have organised a comprehensive exhibition of the council's work. The council, too, is public relations minded. Among many functions it has held to cement communal feeling, I like best the official welcome given in the council chamber to every repatriated prisoner returning to the town and to the first members on leave from the 14th Army, and the installation in the public library of a "suggestions" box and a "war memorial proposals" box—both speedily filling.

—And the Small Branch

THERE is much, too, that the small branch of NALGO can do. This was shown by the newly formed **Tenterden and District** branch (15 members) when, in conjunction with the local youth movement, it held a brains trust in Tenterden's ancient town hall. The "brains" included local officers, a member of Tunbridge Wells borough council, and two officers of Kent county council, and throughout discussion was keen and interest high.

Manchester "Brains" Busy

THE brains trust remains one of the most popular media of public relations. One of the most successful of which I have heard lately was staged by **Manchester** branch, in conjunction with the conference of the Town and Country Planning Association. Mr. P. B. DINGLE, the town clerk, was question master and the "brains" included Lady (SHENA) SIMON, Dr. METCALFE BROWN, the city M.O.H., Mr. R. NICHOLAS, city surveyor, councillors H. QUINNEY and C. STOTT, and Mr. O. L. ABBOTT, branch president. Questions, all on "local government in the future," were invited by poster and press notices and poured in in great number and variety, the topics including housing, the (alleged) autocracy of town clerks, entry of graduates into the local government service, care of the aged, and the possibility of making Manchester's rivers fit for bathing—a subject which gave the "brains" wide scope for flippancy and the audience for amusement. About 500 people listened with keen interest for two hours, and the whole affair was so successful that the branch is considering holding similar brains trusts for suburban youth centres during the winter.

Exhibition's Triumph

NALGO's exhibition, too, is going well, and in addition to the outstanding show at Billericay which we describe on page 419, has been seen during the past weeks at Barking, Bolton, Bradford, Bridgwater, Brighton, Bromsgrove, Cardiff, Castleford, Cornwall, Coulsdon and Purley, Derbyshire, Diss, Doncaster, Durham, Farnham, Goole, Huntingdon, Kingston-on-Thames, Leeds, Nottingham, Potters Bar, and Staveley. In most of these towns the local authority cooperated wholeheartedly, and I have had many reports of successful shows. It is impossible to mention all, but the following extracts from Press cuttings will give some idea of what is being done :

"To describe it as an 'eye-opener' is to understate its interest and value. . . . To those with the seeing eye and the understanding mind it is exhilarating . . . a study in human progress."—*Doncaster Chronicle.*

"Something new in exhibitions . . . brings to light the duties and responsibilities of executive officers on whom the detailed work of local government devolves . . . might be staged with advantage at all the large towns. . . ."—*Sussex Express.*

"Remarkably interesting and highly educative. . . . We believe that the exhibition will accomplish something tangible in arousing the interest of the electorate in municipal government."—*Cornish Echo.*

The direct value of this kind of enterprise to NALGO and its members as well as to local government is emphasised by the *Doncaster Gazette*, which, after calling on visitors to the exhibition to "spare a thought for the hard-working local government officers," refers to NALGO as "one of the most constructive and most highly respected of all organised associations."

Candid Critics

PUBLIC relations does not always evoke praise, of course. But criticism is sometimes healthier, and I imagine the councillors of Walsall will have found refreshing the frank comments of the pupils of a local high school who attended a council meeting and were invited to write their impressions.

"*Almost every member of the Council needs elocution lessons,*" wrote one girl. "*The speeches or statements were either muttered in deep, gruff voices or rushed through so quickly that you could not tell whether the speaker was talking about housing or pig-bins . . .*"

Another girl, also impressed by the poor and inaudible speaking, added :

"*A thing which stood out was how rude the council were to each other. They interrupted, talked quite loudly among themselves, and even strolled around while another member was speaking,*" while a third, even franker, summed up her impressions in the devastating sentence : "*I was not very much impressed by the council, either by the things they do or the way they do it.*"

All the girls were united in their astonishment at the small number of women members, and their conviction that were more to be elected, the council would be better mannered, more audible, and a good deal more sensible.

The Library's Part

I HAVE always felt that municipal libraries could, and should, play a leading part in the public relations campaign. I am glad to find this view confirmed by E. R. GAMESTER, borough librarian at **West Ham**, who has recently published an excellent and most comprehensive reading list of about 120 books on local government and housing which are available in the local libraries. In sending it to me, he comments on "the enormous amount of interest in these subjects at the present time"—an experience NALGO's public relations' department can confirm from its ever-growing postbag.

They Worked

A TOWN councillor attending a local government exhibition at Great Yarmouth tried on a pair of handcuffs which were being exhibited on the police stand.

Colleagues had to take him to local police headquarters to get them off again.—"The Star."

Housing the L.G.O.

SHOULD local authorities allocate council or requisitioned houses to members of their staffs? The question was raised some time ago by a south-eastern branch which pointed out that many officers, having accepted an appointment in another town, found themselves unable to get a home there. Answers to an inquiry circulated by the branch to neighbouring areas have not been encouraging. One council built three houses near its refuse destructor for employees who might be needed immediately in an emergency, and allocated vacant houses to a foreman, a sanitary inspector, and midwives; another earmarked six houses for officers before the war; and a third recently allocated a requisitioned house to a surveying assistant urgently needed for the council's housing programme. Such action, however, seems to be exceptional, and most branches approached took the view that their councils, and public opinion generally, would reject any suggestion of special consideration for local government officers, particularly today. It would be interesting to hear of any alternative solutions of this problem, which in many areas is acute.

Mapping Society

MAPS are always exciting things, whether used for following a battle, planning a holiday, or recollecting tours of the past. But modern map makers do not confine themselves to rivers, roads and contours. They can show every facet of social life on a map: I have seen maps which show that suicide and child delinquency follow defined geographical boundaries. And, just as an aerial photograph may reveal the site and plan of a hitherto unsuspected prehistoric township, so will the sociological map often bring to light facts and correlations as surprising as they are valuable to the planner.

It was in recognition of this fact that Lord Reith, in 1941, set up an advisory committee to consider the preparation of a wide range of maps for a national atlas. This work was continued by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, and now the first seven maps have been published, each to the scale of approximately ten miles to the inch. They include a topographic base map showing all towns, most villages, and all railways, class I roads and canals; a physical map in 50-metre contours; a map of administrative areas showing the boundaries of every local authority in the country and distinguishing in colour between the different types of authority; a land utilisation map showing the different uses to which the land is put; a map showing 17 different types of farming; and a map showing the population density in different parts of the country. Many more are promised, including maps on urban density, population changes, economic resources, electricity and gas supply areas, water distribution, and ports and canals. Interesting to all, these maps will be invaluable to the local government officer, and especially, of course, the town planner.

A NALGO Broadcaster

LISTENERS to the B.B.C. "Woman's Page" on July 27 are sure to have been impressed by the simple earnestness and attractive Scottish accent with which MARGARET HAMILTON, who described herself as a local government officer, outlined the trials and satisfactions of studying for a career. Miss Hamilton is a shorthand-typist in the transport department at **Glasgow**, and a co-opted member of the branch public relations committee. Her talk was of special interest to me, for two reasons: the first, that it arose out of an article by her which was published in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE in November, 1943; the second, that she is the author of those fantasies of the municipal office which, under the pen-name of "Tobias," have helped so successfully to replace "Much Cowslip" in giving light relief to our pages. Why don't more members try to get "on the air"? The B.B.C., especially now that regional broadcasting has returned, is always on the look-out for material of human interest, and, Heaven knows, there's plenty of that in local government. There must be hundreds of members whose work and experiences

ould provide material for at least one good oadcast. I urge them to go to it.

Mr. Middleton

TALKING of broadcasting, I wonder how many of the N.A.L.G.O. members who regularly tuned to Mr. Middleton on Sunday afternoons and ow join with millions in deploring his death, now that he was once a member of the Association?

He is still remembered in the Surrey county ranch, to which he was attached for several years hen he was a horticultural instructor to Surrey ounty council and, though he took no prominent art in branch affairs, he was an active member f the staff club. He resigned in 1934, when ider interests claimed him, but he never lost his nterest in local government, and often referred his broadcasts to the great part it is playing oday in British agriculture and rural life.

Mr. Middleton was not the only Nalgoite to each the fame of the microphone. Arthur askey was once a member of Liverpool branch, nd Ralph Wightman is today a member of Wiltshire branch. Can readers tell me of any nore?

56 Years' Service

RECENT claimants to the local government long-service record include one that is outtanding. In January, 1941, W. H. PAINE retired fter 52 years in the engineer and surveyor's department at **Brighton,** in which he had risen from he bottom to the position of chief clerk. Still ot satisfied that he had had enough, Mr. Paine romptly got another job in the treasurer's department at **Maidenhead,** from which he has just etired after bringing his record of local government service to 56 years—less six years in the Forces during the 1914-18 war. He leaves Maidenhead with appreciative testimonial under he seal of the council. Can any other member eat that?

Other fine records of which I have heard lately are:

H. F. BRADBURN, deputy city treasurer of Worcester, and first treasurer of the Worcester branch, who is still at work after 52 years in the same department. Mr. Bradburn retired after 46½ years in 1940, but volunteered to carry on for the duration—and is doing so yet.

W. J. CAREY, assistant town clerk at Salisbury, who is still at work after 48 years in the same department. Throughout this war, as during the last, Mr. Carey has been secretary of the Salisbury Forces' Hospitality Committee, and since October 7, 1939, has spent every Saturday and Sunday afternoon, with one exception of two week-ends only, at the Guildhall, welcoming and entertaining British and Allied warriors in the town.

HAROLD MASON, chief clerk, Cheshire education committee, a past chairman of the county branch, who has retired after 42 years' service.

W. G. ROBERTS, housing inspector at Poplar, who has just retired after 38 years' service. Mr. Roberts has the unusual distinction for a man of his age of having served for 4½ years as a Flying Officer, R.A.F.V.R.(T) in this war, after four years' service in the 1914-18 war.

Retired

I HEAR of the retirement of three well-known Keighley members—H. M. MARCROFT, borough treasurer since 1928, former branch president and member of the executive; E. RATCLIFFE, director of education since 1926, and a former member of the Yorkshire district committee and the N.E.C.; and C. A. WATSON, deputy borough treasurer, a former branch secretary. Mr. Watson has had 44 years' service, all the in the same department.

Congratulations to—

R. C. GOLDING, former deputy electrical engineer and manager at Great Yarmouth, on his appointment as electrical engineer at Wallasey.

H. GREGORY, former catering manager and mayor's attendant at Stretford, on his appointment as mayor's attendant at Blackpool.

L. KIRKHAM, a member of Manchester branch emergency, joint, and dining-room committees, and of the North-Western district committee, on his appointment as general manager of Manchester's works department.

G. MELVIN, town clerk of Bridlington, on being asked by his council to remain in office for a further twelve months, notwithstanding his completion of 40 years' service.

G. G. MICHAEL, former deputy accountant, Llanelly R.D.C., and chairman of the Llanelly rural branch (of which he is a founder-member), on his appointment as chief financial officer, East Ashford R.D.C.

U.S. Research Bureaux Urge Municipal Reforms and Aid Public Relations

ONE of the biggest problems of local—and national!—government today, as the N.A.L.G.O. Reconstruction Committee has recently pointed out, is that of maintaining effective contact between the elected and the elector, the leader and the led. If democracy is to succeed, the councillor or M.P. must know what his constituents think and want, and the constituent must know what his representatives are doing

"Why appoint a circus employee as a clerk?"
"Perhaps he's used to running around in circles"

and why; so that he can judge them, influence them and, if necessary, turn them out.

In this country we see the solution in a policy of public relations, on the lines long advocated and practised by N.A.L.G.O. In the United States, in addition to public relations, they are apparently experimenting with another channel, described in "*Municipal Research Bureaux*," by NORMAN N. GILL, a book published last year in the U.S.A. but not yet available here.

American municipal research bureaux are mostly voluntary organisations, supported largely by liberal, philanthropic, middle-class folk, and undertaking investigations into the administrative questions which confront local authorities. They have, for example, inquired into salary standards of municipal staff, efficiency rating systems, fire service organisation, the "merit system" of staff appointment (contrasted with the spoils system), hospital administration, and local government finance.

Having conducted their inquiries, with the aid of expert staff, they submit their recommendations to the local authority or its officers, and (surprisingly to British readers) many are accepted. A long list of administrative reforms adopted as a result of these outside investigations makes it clear that the bureaux have acquired no little prestige and that the authorities feel no loss of *amour propre* in accepting their advice.

But the bureaux do not bury their findings in the town hall. They broadcast them—in pamphlets, bulletins, newspaper articles, and public lectures. They advertise local government—and advocate better local government. Sometimes, but rarely, they find municipal abuses which do not yield to their technique of objective examination and report; then they launch a public campaign to expose the evil and propound the remedy. And, according to Mr. Gill, they have some victories to their credit.

The bureaux are to be distinguished from "taxpayers' associations" which aim primarily at lower rates; the bureaux want economy and efficiency, but they mean by these terms the best service even if it costs more. It is because they are not simply advocates of lower rates, says Mr. Gill, that they do not attract a mass membership—most ratepayers, he implies, care only about paying less, regardless of what they get for their money. This means that the bureaux are dependent on the subscriptions of the enlightened well-to-do, which gives a somewhat cautious tinge to their policy and has alienated organised Labour.

In addition to these "citizen-controlled" (i.e. independent) bureaux, there are a few which are controlled by the municipalities themselves. They are, in effect, efficiency auditors and in practice they concentrate on the financial aspects of the questions they cover. They rarely deal with policy, but apply an independent eye to administrative methods. They report, of course, to their appointing authority and have no direct contacts with the citizens. Mr. Gill speaks rather disparagingly of them as being restricted in scope and freedom; but they would probably prove more acceptable in this country where local authorities prize their dignity too much to welcome criticism, however sound and well meant, from outsiders. This is perhaps a pity, for there is much of value in the idea of informed external comment by a relatively impartial body which has the power, if its advice is wantonly ignored, to make the facts known to the electorate. It would often be unpleasant, but it might be very health-giving.

"A Bell for Adano" Should Interest Every L.G.O.

"A *BELL for Adano*," by JOHN HERSEY (Gollancz), now made into a film and a play, is a novel that should interest every local government officer.

It is the story of how an American officer in Civil Affairs, by his wise and humane administration of a small Italian town, transformed its inhabitants from a suspicious, half-stunned, discontented, and factious crowd into a reasonably happy and well-ordered community. This difficult task was accomplished not without dust and heat. The theories about administering occupied territories all turned out to be just theories, and Major Joppolo (an American of Italian origin) had to supplement the official instructions and his lecture notes on public safety, public health, civilian safety, finance utilities, transportation, etc., with his own *Notes to Joppolo from Joppolo*. These included:

"Always be accessible to the public. Don't play favourite. Don't lose your temper. When plans fall down, improvise . . ."

Plans *did* fall down, and Major Joppolo improvised—with tact, imagination and success. Hear him expounding to Italian officials what his administration stands for:

"Adano has been a Fascist town. That is natural, because the country was Fascist, therefore the town was also. But now that the Americans have come we are going to run the town as a democracy.

"Perhaps you do not know what a democracy is. I will tell you.

"Democracy is this: democracy is that the men of the government are no longer the masters of the people. They are the servants of the people. What makes a man master of another man? It is that he pays for his work. Who pays the men in the government? The people do, for they pay the taxes out of which you are paid.

"Therefore you are now the servants of the people of Adano. I, too, am their servant. When I go to buy bread, I shall take my place at the end of the line, and I will wait my turn. You, too, must behave now as servants, not as masters. You must behave as the servant of the man without shoes just as much as of the baron. If I find that any of you are not giving the type of service that I desire, I shall have to remove you from office."

His difficulties with his colleagues, with the Italian officials, and with a fire-eating American general; how he arranged for the feeding, clothing, and general well-being of the inhabitants of Adano; his final triumph in securing, through the co-operation of some U.S.A. naval officers, a fine ship's bell to replace a historic bell which the Germans had taken away to melt down for cannon—all this Mr. Hersey describes in a racy imaginative style.

C. K. W.

Assistant Nurses Must be Enrolled

IN accordance with the provisions of the Nurses Act, 1943, all assistant nurses must be enrolled by October 15; those not enrolled after that date will not be able to use the title "nurse."

Assistant nurses who have not enrolled should, therefore, apply at once to the Registrar, General Nursing Council for England and Wales, 23, Portland Place, London, W.1, for admission to the roll. Details of the conditions for admission are set out in Ministry of Health Circular 133/45, copies of which were sent on July 28 to all local authorities and county and district nursing associations.

"Don't Shackle Local Government Information Bureaux!"

AFTER reading the summary in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, I have recently been able to study the full report of the N A L G O Reconstruction Committee on the Relations between Local Government and the Community—a study which has deepened my admiration of the painstaking research and consideration which must have been necessary in the production of so reasonable and balanced a document.

As information officer of one of our largest corporations, I am naturally most directly interested in paragraphs 55-56, dealing with information bureaux, and, whilst I agree with the general recommendations, I cannot allow paragraph 56 to pass without comment. I do not know on what grounds or upon what practical experience it is recommended that municipal information bureaux should deal only with queries relative to local government, leaving other questions to be answered by the unofficial Citizens' Advice Bureaux, but I do know, as a result of my experience during the past six years, that it is impracticable to draw a line of demarcation between local government and general inquiries.

The municipal information bureau for which I am responsible was established in 1938 with the object (in addition to public relations work generally and the publication of municipal handbooks) of "directing people to the proper quarter and answering general inquiries." It soon became apparent that the public drew no distinction between local government matters and any subject which touched upon their private lives. Notwithstanding the existence of twelve Citizens' Advice Bureaux in the city, we have been called on to give information and general advice upon a range of subjects which would probably surprise the Reconstruction Committee; yet we have had not one complaint from any source that the local authority was "intervening in issues which lie between private citizens and helping one as against the other." This charge cannot be laid against a municipal information bureau, for its services are available to all, its officers are impartial, and both parties to a problem may equally avail themselves of its advice. Naturally, the bureau staff confine themselves to explaining to the inquirer his rights, and the way in which they may be exercised, and make no pronouncement on the implications of the facts stated.

We have dealt with a monthly average of 3,000-4,000 inquiries during the war. While many inquirers have expressed resentment when the advice we have given has been unsatisfactory to them—as, for example, when we have had to advise that young women about to be married do not receive an extra allotment of clothing coupons!—we have had no complaints about the nature of the advice or the way in which it has been given; on the contrary, we have had many expressions of gratitude.

I agree that independent Citizens' Advice Bureaux should continue, not under the control of, but working in close harmony with, and supported by, the local authority; many people will wish to avail themselves of their services. But, equally, I believe that it would be a grave mistake to attempt to draw a distinction between local government and non-local government queries in a municipal information bureau. Imagine the effect upon the citizen who has always looked upon "the Town Hall" as the source of information and help (and surely we wish to make this relationship even more intimate), of the answer: "We are sorry, but your inquiry does not relate to local government and we are not allowed to answer you. You will have to go to the Citizens' Advice Bureau at . . ." What will he think? "These damned officials, hide-bound and hedged around with red tape as usual! What do we pay rates for? The usual unhelpful official attitude!"

Even the resettlement advice offices of the Ministry of Labour, set up to deal with the problems of demobilised servicemen and persons leaving war factories for normal civilian employment, have realised that this demarcation cannot be drawn, and have made it their policy to answer questions from any inquirer upon any subject. If a government department may advise where the answer is known, or refer to the appropriate public or private authority, I can see no reason why a municipal authority, with its more intimate contact with its own ratepayers—a relationship which surely should be fostered—should not do likewise.

Those who object to a local government advice service often bring forward as an argument the supposed fact that the representative of a private organisation is likely to be more sympathetic towards the applicant, than would be a public official. A fitting reply to this argument was given to me the other day by the organiser of a social service council in the South of England, who said: "I have always found public officials to be quite as helpful as the officials of private charities. What is more, I can say from personal experience that there is no one less charitable than the unpaid charitable worker of the wrong type. I recall one local branch of a society dealing with the welfare of servicemen and their families from which women would come to me in tears, protesting against the harsh manner of their reception and treatment. No public official would wish to treat applicants in that way, nor would he remain long in office were he to do so."

The key to the problem of "to advise or not to advise" is surely contained in one word—discretion. Local authorities should give their information staff *carte blanche* to use their discretion in dealing with inquiries. If they have been properly trained to distinguish between advice and partisanship, between legal and non-legal points, and between the cases which should be advised and those which should be referred to another authority, I am certain that the public will be better served in every way by a full service of information and advice on all subjects, than by a narrow service of local government information only.

The opinions of other municipal officers on this point would be of the greatest interest and value.

INFORMATION OFFICER.

READERS' FORUM

Letters for the November journal must reach the Editor, 24, Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1, not later than Thursday, October 19.

MUNICIPAL INQUIRY OFFICES
Must They be Manned by Juniors?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE frequently stresses the need for all local government officers to be imbued with the spirit of service to the community. I cannot dispute that claim. But recent experience as a demobilised officer have led me to doubt whether local government itself is inspired by the same high endeavour.

My most urgent problem was to find a house, flat, or rooms in the London area. Before the war, I lived out of Town and motored to work. Now, I have no car, cannot afford one, and, since I work at night, must live in an area served by all-night trains. I tried house agents. All told me that they had no accommodation to let, and that my only hope was to apply to the local authority.

I went to one council office and was directed to a pigeon-hole. The window was opened by a charming child of 14, who told me that the billeting officer, for whom I asked, was away for a month on holiday. I asked for his deputy. "I can deal with the matter," the child replied sweetly. "We are carrying on in his absence."

So I explained, adding that, before leaving Germany, I had been told that I could go anywhere in England to get a house.

The child, clearly repeating a set piece which she had learned well, assured me that this information was quite wrong. If I was not a former inhabitant of the borough, nothing could be done for me.

I grew angry, and, as a result, an older woman came to the pigeon-hole. She was courteous, kind and willing to help. But the best she could do was to take details, which she promised to submit to the billeting officer on his return in a month's time. If he approved, my application would go before the housing committee, which met three weeks later. If the committee approved, my name would be added to the waiting list of 1,200.

I went to another council office. Here the procedure was exactly the same—except that the first stooge was a boy of 15, and the woman was replaced by a youth of 18.

Why all this nonsense? It is sufficiently infuriating to have to talk through a pigeon-hole. When, on top of that, a child is put up to stop people becoming a nuisance, then local government is falling into disrepute.

If local authorities have no houses, let them say so; nobody, ex-serviceman or civilian, objects to being told the truth. But it might be told with dignity, with authority, and not in a way calculated to make the inquirer feel that he is regarded as an itinerant beggar. A search for a house today is such a hopeless task that even a little kindness goes a long way.

Some millions of men are coming home in the next few months, from Germany, from Italy, from Burma, from the High Seas. What will they feel—and do—when they are welcomed by the pigeon-hole girl?

DONALD C. WRIGHT, Major.

Richmond.

(This letter is referred to in our editorial column.)

WAS CONFERENCE WORTH IT?
"Dull and Windy"

MANY delegates who, like myself, had to give up six of their twelve days' annual leave to attend Conference must have asked themselves: "Was the Conference worth such a sacrifice?" Mr. Allen's statement that the National Whitley Council had recommended restoration of the four weeks' annual leave no doubt cheered the chief officers present, but was of no comfort to the rank and file.

Conference was much like the Blackpool weather—dull and windy. One reason for this was the handling of the agenda by the platform. Surely the N.E.C. could so arrange the time table that all items on the agenda received proper consideration.

It seemed bad policy to allow speakers on the first two days to have unlimited time (even to the point of boredom) and then to find at the opening of the last day that there was still half the agenda to consider. The rush tactics adopted at the final session precluded any serious consideration of many important resolutions and reflected little credit on our Association. I understand that at the Labour Party Conference even speakers of Cabinet rank were subject to a time limit, an example N A L G O might follow with advantage.

Finally, is the N.E.C. satisfied that the policy of moving Conference away from Whit-week to obtain more publicity for N A L G O affairs was justified by results? Neither national nor local newspapers showed any enthusiasm about Conference.

It would be interesting to know whether the majority of the delegates like the new arrangement, or would prefer to revert to Whit-week.

10, Withy Parade, Fulwood. W. MASHETER,
Hon. Secretary, Preston and Fulwood Branch.

A Wholesale Indictment

YOUR report of Conference is admirable, but why it needs illuminating by so many comic strips, taking so much space, beats me. The illustration was hardly in keeping with the importance of the subject.

The conclusion of my reading, based on many opinions expressed by delegates and members of N.E.C., is that N A L G O is reactionary, undemocratic, illusioned, out of date, smug and snobbish. The attitude of Conference to T.U.C. affiliation was a blackleg one, and its notions Victorian. Delegates spoke and voted without mandate, as few received instructions from open branch meetings. The democratic referendum, merely as a possible medium, was rejected, the N.E.C. knowing what is good for the membership. In fact, this spirit of "leave it to the N.E.C." prevailed throughout. All that members have to do is to pay, and more dearly. The view, apparently, is that local government officers are somehow different from other folk, forgetting that their membership of the Association indicates that they are as much wage workers as the man who sweeps the roads. Talk of the responsibility of the officer to the public is hypocrisy—he is in local government because it affords him a better livelihood than service in the average commercial house; the assumption of an obligation to inform the public of services and duties to the public as though they were a charity is presumption and hardly within the functions of a trade union, which are still at bottom the matter of wages and hours and old age; the pride in the benevolent fund is that which humiliates and obligates the receiver and gives ascendency to the giver. Most self-respecting persons would to hell with an order of society which makes necessary such charities granted only after a most abasing examination. So could one go on. What is the lesson? It is that the individual member should bestir himself, take a livelier interest in his own affairs, and cease to delegate his interests and ideas for others to interpret. All power to the people!

ncidentally, why was Mr. Allen put up so frently. Was it because he was the best fobber ? f members want an indication of how to vote he next N.E.C. election they should read all the ort and they will discern.
Walthamstow Branch. GEO. D. WEBB.

gher Subscriptions Opposed

S a temporary clerk, I oppose increased subscriptions. The present monthly ount is divided between N A L G O and the & O. Fund. If subscriptions must be inased, then let all of the present amount go to B. & O. Fund ; and I will resign membership N A L G O.
think that temporary clerks should form their n organisation, or join the Clerks' Union. Nationalisation of local government is long rdue and would benefit temporary clerks.
CONTEMPORARY.

W GENERAL SECRETARY

lary Criticised

READ with some astonishment the proposed salary which is to be paid to the new General retary of N A L G O—£2,000 per annum, ng to £2,500.
should like to know how such a figure has en arrived at when one takes into consideration e fact that few members, including chief officers, i dream of aspiring to anything approaching it. I notice also that there are apparently no alifications required for this post, although ide the service a similar salary would certainly quire many qualifications, and in politics one uld have to be at least a Cabinet Minister to tain it.
I can now appreciate why the N.E.C. has found necessary to increase the subscriptions of mbers, most of whose salaries do not exceed 00 per annum.
Town Hall, L. W. TURP.
Bethnal Green, E.2.

SUPERANNUATION ANOMALY

direct Service Not Counted

WHEN the Superannuation Act was passed it was generally understood that it provided for direct service being reckonable as non-contributory service provided the employing authority cided by resolution so to recognise it, and I lieve that some officers have retired on pension 60 after 40 years' service which has included me indirect service.
Now, I understand, the Ministry of Health s given a decision that indirect service cannot counted as part of the 40 years for voluntary irement but that it can be counted for retirent on health grounds and at 65 years of age.
I hope that the N.E.C. will make every effort to t this matter right and have restored to members at they always understood had been granted them by the 1937 Act.
It would be wrong to imagine that this vicious stem of indirect service has been confined to e smaller urban and rural authorities. It has isted amongst larger authorities, with the sult that officers are now being penalised, rough no fault of their own, when they wish to ire voluntarily at 60 years of age. I have rved all my life in a county borough, but for e first ten years I was in the direct service of ne of the officers of the authority.
HOPEFUL.

As was pointed out during the Conference bate on superannuation and reported in the urnal for July-August, 1945 (page 374, column 1) e N.E.C. is already pledged to seek an amendent of the Act to secure the recognition of indirect rvice in the determination of an officer's right a pension.

arlier Retirement Plea

S N A L G O now taking up the question of voluntary retirement for officers of either x at the age of 60 ? There must be some women ho, after six years of war strain, would retire, they were allowed to, at the age of 61. I would adly do so, even though my pension would e very small ; it would be preferable to continuing ork when feeling run down, although not ill nough for a medical retirement certificate.
S. E. LONDON MEMBER.

N A L G O is already pledged to seek amendment f the Superannuation Acts to secure, among other ings, the right to retire at 60 or at any time after mpletion of 40 years' service, and will do so as on as there is any prospect of a Bill being bmitted to Parliament. Most women nurses, ealth visitors, and midwives may now retire at 55.

SPECIALISTS' SALARIES

Should Engineers Have Higher Rate ?

GROMATICUS' plea for consideration of specialists' salaries in the September journal was timely.
Compare two entrants to the service : " A " begins in the junior grade and " B " becomes a technical assistant in the engineer's department. By the time " A " reaches his 25th birthday he will, on the N A L G O scale, have earned £967 plus war bonus. " B " does not begin earning until he is twenty-one at least. Assuming he is put into Grade A of the professional and technical division at once, he will, by the time he is 25, have earned £1080. But tuition, examination expenses, and professional subscriptions will have cost him more than the £113 he has gained in salary. In most cases his articles will have cost between two and three hundred guineas, so that he will be that much down on " A," apart from the years he has given to hard evening study.
The technical assistant may have a better chance of promotion, though " A " is unlikely to remain in the general division if he displays as much zeal and ability as " B " has had to show. Moreover, every time " B " secures promotion he will have to pay his own removal expenses to another town. Of course " B " may ultimately rise to be a borough engineer ; but a little observation and a study of advertisements will show that there are vacancies for less than one technical assistant in twenty to reach the top.
There have recently been advertisements for technical assistants at salaries of £130. A start at the £235 of the technical scale is almost unique. So the officer who chooses to become a technical assistant takes a long time to regain his out-of-pocket expenses, let alone show a profit.
The Institution of Civil Engineers has issued a circular stating that it is solely concerned with the advancement of scientific knowledge, and that salaries and service conditions are outside its province. The Institution of Municipal and County Engineers has recently published advertisements in its own journal at salaries below the scale it purports to sponsor. The Ministry of Health has no concern with the appointment of specialists except doctors and sanitary inspectors.
N A L G O alone remains as a constitutional medium for approaching local authorities, but the specialists of the municipal engineer's department form a small section of N A L G O, and their anomalous position is not generally realised.
A. MICE, M.Inst.M. & Cy.E.
Regional Town Planner.

SHOULD "TEMPS" BECOME "PERMS"

"Penalising Members In Forces"

I NOTE with misgiving " Abingdon's " report of the action taken by Luton branch to secure permanent posts for temporaries who wish to remain in the service. Members now in the Forces are likely to be penalised should this attitude be generally adopted.
There is still some graft in local government, and it is possible for a temporary officer to obtain a permanent appointment on grounds other than those of ability. I have recently been discharged from the Services myself, and might wish to apply for one of the positions which, it would appear, will now be offered to temporary officers with far less local government experience.
Such a scheme as this will defeat Headquarters' recommendations of " temporary jobs for the duration," and further hinder the efforts of returning members to make up for their enforced break in service.
I hope that other branches will take a wider view and that Headquarters will give some guidance, otherwise many of us will be waiting for " internal promotion "—hardly encouraging to an ambitious young officer.
" MILITANT."

No Cobwebs, Please !

I TRUST that the cartoon you published recently showing a returning service man being offered his job back plus an accumulation of filing, cobwebs and dirt was not an example of a true state of affairs being depicted in jest.
Chief officers (please don't leave it to chief clerks, who are sometimes the worst offenders) should make a special point of seeing that all filing, indexing, and other important routine jobs are up-to-date, so that on our return we may see what has been going on in our absence, thus enabling us to " pick up the threads " once again.
W. J. TURNER.
Hampstead branch, but Group 31.

PUBLIC ANALYST'S WORK

—And Sanitary Inspector's, Too

WHILE I have no wish to detract from the importance of the public analyst's contribution to society, and do not dispute that, for payment, he may examine food submitted by any interested person, I am inclined to resent the tendency on the part of Mr. Bullock in his letter in the June journal to minimise the work of the sanitary inspector. Most of the samples I take are of milk for bacteriological examination, which is done by the bacteriologist, not the analyst. A sanitary inspector may himself examine milk by the sedimentation test.
As a sanitary inspector—*inter alia*—with university training and laboratory experience—I claim that, apart from medical officers, sanitary inspectors by reason of their knowledge of the basic principles of the organisms of disease, etc., are the most suitable officers for submitting samples of any nature, and are certainly not mere collectors of miscellaneous foodstuffs.
Chester-le-Street. GEORGE C. BANKS,
Sanitary, Housing, and Food Inspector.

IN DEFENCE OF BLIMP

"Justified By Events"

I WAS amused to see in Edward Kay's review of Lord Hankey's latest book, " Government Control in War," the somewhat patronising remark that Lord Hankey's ideas on public policy " bear no small resemblance to those of Colonel Blimp."
It was, I believe, first pointed out by Christopher Hollis, M.P., and since developed by Lord Elton and others, that the apparently silly remarks of the colonel have often been justified by events, while those of his progressive creator, Low, have been falsified. One of the most salutary results of a study of history (as it happened, not as it is written !) is a realisation of how often the most violently anti-social policies have been sponsored by the progressives of their day, and opposed by the reactionaries. I need only instance the slave trade.
BLIMPISSIMUS.

"SACK THE WOMEN ?"

Let Work Count, Not Sex

I TAKE a poor view of the letter from " Eagle Eye " in the June journal calling for the " sacking " of all women engaged during the war.
There are single women like myself who have to earn their living, and have not only done their ordinary job but have performed responsible duties in the N.F.S. and other civil defence services. I was on all-night duty throughout the whole week in the N.F.S. during the London blitz and was awarded the B.E.M. Surely the quality of one's work should count, not sex.
Hove, Sussex. M. SADLER.

READING OF "HANSARD"

"A New Peril to Life"

IT is no doubt essential that an official record be kept of Parliamentary speeches for the convenience of members of the House of Commons. But God forbid that anyone else should be encouraged to wade through the dismal mass of verbiage which constitutes " Hansard." Your correspondents who urge the formation of " Hansard Clubs " in N A L G O branches are trying to add a new peril to life. I beseech them to concentrate on managing their back gardens instead of trying to manage the British Empire !
5, Courtnell Street, JOHN C. LAURENCE.
London, W.2.

NALGO AND THE W.E.A.

Attendance at Summer Schools

AS a branch secretary of the W.E.A. and a member of N A L G O, I have been interested in the recent correspondence on the suggestion that the Association should offer scholarships to W.E.A. summer schools.
I should like to point out that anyone may attend a W.E.A. summer school, providing he has taken a course in one of the many subjects dealt with by this association. He is eligible even if he has attended only a summer course of six or twelve weeks but, of course, preference is given to those attending a winter session of 26 weeks. A fee of approximately 7s. 6d. is all that is needed for a winter session.
79, Wellington Road, B. MULLETT.
Dudley, Worcs. Sedgley branch.

How Warriors Learn About Local Government

By Lt. J. D. MYNARD, R.A.S.C. (Warwickshire C.C. Branch)

"THERE is too much apathy about local government. People don't know enough about it." How many times before the outbreak of war did we hear these and similar remarks—and how true they were!

I recently completed a most interesting fourteen days' education course at the Army School of Education, C.M.F., and, as a local government officer, was greatly impressed to find the prominence given to local government in the curriculum.

The school is in one of the oldest universities in Italy. The course was mainly devoted to the instruction of unit education officers on the plans and problems of the Army post-hostilities education scheme; similar courses are also being held for warrant officers and N.C.O.s.

Those attending came from all over the theatre—from the front line to Base—and included officers of all arms of the Service. They were, therefore, fully representative of many walks of life and varying shades of opinion.

One morning session was devoted to a study of local government and how it works, and throughout the other lectures and discussions it continually cropped up in one or another of its aspects.

During the fourteen days each student had to give a 30-minutes lecture on a chosen subject and I, being engaged in public health before donning khaki, was selected to speak on that subject. In the discussion which followed it was interesting to note how many and varied were the questions asked by people who really appeared keen to know about the problems involved. There is no doubt that had more time been available discussion would have been prolonged, for there seemed to be a general desire for knowledge. This applied equally to some of the lectures given by other local government officers on quite different branches of local government work.

Surely this is an encouraging sign of the times, which will be noted with satisfaction by other members who realise that it is only through a keen appreciation by the general public of the work and problems of local government that interest and progress will be achieved.

It is certainly an encouraging sign, and one which, we know, is being repeated in every branch of the Forces and in every theatre of war. Already more than 1,200 sets of the NALGO exhibition have been ordered for the use of Navy, Army, and Air Force units throughout the world, and at home hundreds of branches have been invited to help units in their areas by providing speakers and arranging visits to council meetings and local government activities. We hope that all concerned will make the most of this tremendous opportunity to create that educated democracy essential to good local government—and to a square deal for the local government officer. In particular, we appeal to every local government officer in the Forces to get in touch with his unit education officer and offer himself to talk to his comrades about local government as he knows it, from the inside.

"I should like you to meet our junior clerk, who hopes soon to be back with us."

NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

For the first time since D-Day the Roll of Honour this month is happily short, and we trust that it will soon disappear. Before it does so, however, may we ask every branch secretary to go through his records and make sure that every member entitled to mention has, in fact, been mentioned.

KILLED OR DIED ON SERVICE

Lewis, W.O. C. G., R.A.F.V.R., architect's dept., Glamorgan C.C.

Mitchell, Gnr. T., surveyor's dept., Gillingham.

Philip, P/O. R. T., R.A.F., surveyor's dept., Purley.

Rowse, Pte. F. A., R.A.S.C., education dept., Croydon.

Turner, Cpl. R. H., R.M., Portsmouth.

MISSING

Smith, F/O. D. A. J., D.F.C., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Oxford (presumed killed).

Worsley, Sgt. F., R.A.F., public assistance dept., Cheshire C.C. (presumed killed).

AWARDS TO MEMBERS

CROIX DE GUERRE AND SILVER STAR

Cope, Lt. G., treasurer's dept., Sutton Coldfield —for distinguished services in Normandy.

M.C.

Cooke, Lt. J., finance dept., Devon C.C.

Rees, Lt. D. G., R.E., valuation dept., Exeter —for bridge building under continued shell and mortar fire in Italy in November, 1945 (see Mentioned in Dispatches).

Smith, Capt. E. G., R.A., surveyor's dept., Gillingham—for gallant services in exposed positions on the Italian front.

D.F.C.

James, Sqdr/Ldr. E., R.A.F., engineer and surveyor's dept., Glamorgan C.C.

A.F.C.

Brewer, W.O. F. T. H., R.A.F.V.R., weights and measures dept., Portsmouth—for services in the East Asia Command.

M.M.

Meads, L/Bdr. F. H. D., R.A., treasurer's dept., Beckenham.

D.F.M.

Jarmey, F/Sgt., R.A.F., passenger transport dept., Portsmouth—for operations in Italy.

M.B.E.

Baker, Lt/Col. L. E., R.A.O.C., treasurer's dept., Battersea—in recognition of gallant and distinguished services in N.W. Europe (previously mentioned in dispatches).

Waldock, R/S/M. K. G., R.A.M.C., health dept., Croydon.

B.E.M.

Russell, F/Sgt. W. S., R.A.F.V.R., education dept., Isle of Wight C.C.

MERITORIOUS SERVICE CERTIFICATE

Baker, Maj. W. G. (T.A.), rating and valuation dept., Penybont R.D.

Bridges, Sgt. H., rating dept., Runcorn R.D.

Sutton, W.O. A. B., rating dept., Runcorn R.D.

MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES

Bartram, Sqdr/Ldr. J. H., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Beckenham.

Benton, R/S/M. L. G., R.A.M.C., health dept., Croydon.

Johnson, Bty. Q.M.S., F. R., treasurer's dept., Colchester.

Joyce, Sgt. W., clerk's dept., Runcorn R.D.C.

Rees, Lt. D. G., M.C., R.E., valuation dept., Exeter—for work early in 1945 (see under M.C.).

CORRECTION

In the May journal we recorded the award of the Military Cross to **Lt. V. M. Jones**, Glamorgan C.C. The award was made to **Lt. V. M. James**.

37 Members in King's Birthday Honours

THE names of at least 37 NALGO members appeared in the King's Birthday Honours. The following list is as complete as we could make it, but if any members have been inadvertently omitted, we ask them to accept our apologies and their branches to send details, which will be published next month.

C.B.E.

J. Lythgoe, city treasurer, Manchester.

O.B.E.

R. G. Baxter, M.B.E., borough engineer and A.R.P. controller, Southend-on-Sea.

Edward Bishop, employers' secretary, National Whitley Council.

C. E. Cranfield, town clerk and A.R.P. controller, West Ham (vice-president, West Ham branch).

S. A. Findlay, A.M.Inst.C.E., borough engineer, Poplar.

W. H. Gimson, A.M.Inst.C.E., borough engineer and war damage officer, Woolwich (vice chairman and past president of Woolwich branch).

Miss E. M. Gunnell, organiser of women's horticultural work, Devon C.C.

J. A. McMillan, executive officer, Cambridgeshire war agricultural executive committee.

Robert Stribley Murt, M.Inst.C.E., county surveyor, Staffordshire.

P. Parr, city engineer and officer-in-charge, civil defence rescue service, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

J. A. Scott, F.S.A.A., J.P., A.R.P. controller, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire.

C. M. Smith, M.D., D.P.H., medical officer of health, Northamptonshire C.C.

J. H. Smith, town clerk and A.R.P. controller, Lincoln.

F. G. Townsend, town clerk and A.R.P. controller, Worthing.

M.B.E.

J. Ainsworth, lately food executive officer and national registration officer, Plymouth.

W. D. Beaton, A.R.P. officer, Kirkcaldy, Fifeshire.

P. H. Cole, entertainments manager, Plymouth, (chairman, South Western district committee).

C. E. Cox, local fuel overseer, Bromsgrove R.D.

W. A. Cross, clerk to Prescot U.D. (founder member of Prescot branch).

E. F. Cull, A.R.P. sub-controller, Hatfield (Herts) R.D. and clerk to Hatfield R.D.

D. A. Dallas, A.M.Inst.C.E., A.R.P. sub-controller, Brentwood area, Essex.

L. W. G. Dawson, lay organiser, casualty services, Hackney.

A. C. Denton, C.D. ambulance officer, East Ham.

Capt. C. R. Goss, A.R.P. officer, Devon.

Maj. H. M. Lees, chief warden, St. Helens.

W. G. Lofthouse, A.R.I.B.A., A.R.P. sub-controller, Bilston.

T. T. C. McWhirter, youth organiser, Aberdeen.

J. M. M. O'Hara, A.R.P. officer, Poole.

J. Owen, district A.R.P. controller and clerk to Boldon U.D.

W. Wilson, chief public assistance officer, Fife C.C. (former president, Fife branch).

W. S. Wilson, engineer and surveyor and head of the C.D. rescue service, Chesterfield.

B.E.M. (Civil Division)

E. C. Archer, fire guard officer, Newhaven.

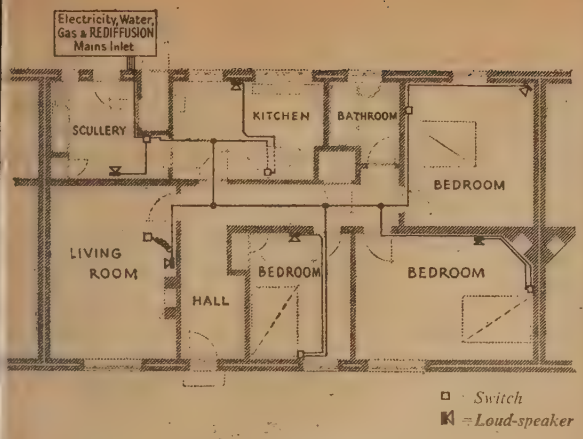
G. C. Grant, officer-in-charge, county control centre messengers, Warwickshire.

H. W. Newton, staff officer, control centre, Barnsley (joint hon. secretary, Barnsley and district branch, for past 20 years).

H. Peacock, billeting officer, Brownhills U.D. (chairman of branch executive).

P. V. Thomas, distribution foreman, gas dept., Middlesbrough.

W. H. Wharton, engineer's traffic plant assistant, Bristol.



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SCOTTISH NOTES

Wanted—More Staffs Joint Committees

AS a first step in reorganising our main industries, the President of the Board of Trade has announced that to encourage and stimulate efficiency in the cotton industry it is proposed "to deal with all problems upon the basis of a tripartite partnership."

This is the principle upon which NALGO's public relations policy is based, but, more important still, it is the principle behind the staffs joint committee a form of partnership which is rapidly gaining support in England and which is supplementing the work of the provincial Whitley councils.

So far, the setting up of staffs joint committees in Scotland has not met with the approval of the employers: indeed, the staffs side of the Joint Industrial Council does not agree that they will improve conditions in the service. Some of the trade union members of the staffs side apparently fail to recognise the proper functions of staffs joint committees.

The staffs joint committee can bring into being a much closer partnership than exists to-day. Fears that it might attempt to review decisions of the Joint Industrial Council or interfere with national standards are groundless—and in any event it would be for the National Joint Council to determine the extent to which it should discuss conditions of service.

It is with the problems facing local government that we are most concerned. The development of a vigorous housing policy and of a national health service, together with the many other projected extensions of departmental activities, will present local authorities with many major problems of organisation and administration, in the solution of which the staffs may be able to offer much constructive advice.

In the past it has been the policy of local authorities to decide these questions for themselves. They have failed to recognise that their employees possess knowledge and experience, the use of which might contribute to the smoother working and greater efficiency of all local services. Delays in execution and "bottlenecks" in administration would be eliminated by a pooling of executive and administrative experience.

Sir Stafford Cripps, in dealing with the plans for the cotton industry, also said: "More and more the trade unions have been claiming and taking their position as partners in the formulation of industrial policy, and this new step towards industrial organisation will establish their equal responsibility."

We have long been claiming our right to be regarded as partners in local government. That does not imply any claim to formulate policy, which is the prerogative of the elected representatives. We do suggest, however, that the elected representatives would find it to their advantage and the advantage of the community were they to seek and consider our views before final decisions on policy are taken.

The machinery for securing this partnership exists in the staffs joint committees. The fact that the Government is supporting, in private industry, the appointment of similar committees is sufficient to justify our pressing for their establishment in the local government service in Scotland.

Moreover, the Joint Industrial Council has provided, in its constitution, for machinery of this kind as part of its organisation. While there are certain problems which can best be discussed at the national level, many others are more suitable for discussion at the local level.

Confidence in the Joint Industrial Council is growing. The staffs and the employers are more closely related than ever before. Widespread appointment of local joint committees would hasten the attainment of a complete partnership and would help us to demonstrate that, as officers, we recognise our responsibilities, not only to the elected representatives, but to the community.

Summer School

Arrangements are being made for a summer school to be held at St. Andrews University during the first week of July, 1946.

MOTORING

Details of the NALGO motor hire purchase scheme should be studied by all members contemplating the purchase of a car—new or secondhand. Full information will be sent on request to NALGO Insurance Dept., 24, Abingdon Street, S.W.1.

SEND A VICTORY GIFT TO THE B. and O. FUND!

YORK branch has set a fine example to all NALGO members by sending a Victory Gift of £100—raised by the holding of "old time" dances during the past few months—to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund. Were every branch to make a special victory appeal on behalf of the Fund, the reserves, already good, would soon be built up to a figure able to meet the undoubtedly heavy demands of the years ahead, and to allow the more generous benefits called for by conditions today.

Many other branches continue to do fine work for the Fund, recent donations including:

Barrow—£20 (draws);
Blackpool—£17 6s. 9d. (dance and raffle);
Cardiff—£121 13s. 8d., made up of £93 3s. 8d., the balance in hand of the City Hall firewatching group recreational fund, and £28 10s. from the A.R.P. control and report centre canteen fund;
Chesterfield—£50 (dances and sweeps);
Clacton—£80 (dance and concert);
Colwyn Bay—£20 6s. 10d.;
East Suffolk—£23 11s. 2d.;
Fulham—£26 16s. 9d. (dances);
Gloucester—£38 15s. (annual dance and football competition);
Grimsby—£5 5s. (under the Sunday Entertainments Act, 1932);
Hampshire County—£20 10s. 9d. (balance of the firewatchers' fund);
Hendon—£10 6s. 6d. (draws);
Hereford County—£50 (also under the Sunday Entertainments Act);
Leicester County—£43 (dances);
Loughborough —£5 5s. (dances);
Luton—£25 (dances);
Middlesex County—£2 2s. (from Civil Defence Welfare Fund);
Oxford County—£28 15s. (dances and social);
Somerset County—£119 (draws);
Southwark—£10 12s. (draws);
Staffordshire Potteries Water Board—£11 2s. 6d. (concert);
Stewartry of Kirkcudbright—£8 3s. 3d. (whist drive);
Tamworth—£5 (dances);
Wolverhampton—£8 4s. 8d. (dances); and
Wycombe Borough—£50 (dances).

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Education for Road Transport

A NEW scheme of training for administrative and operative staffs of road transport undertakings is to be launched by the Royal Society of Arts next year, on the recommendation of a conference convened by the Institute of Transport, drawn up by a committee of which Mr. R. Stuart Pilcher, transport manager at Manchester, was chairman. The scheme is designed to give employees in the industry an intelligent grasp of the techniques involved in running road transport services. The three-year course covers road transport operation (passenger and goods), elements of road transport engineering, accounts and statistics, and economics applied to road transport. Fees are low—4s. for a single subject, or 10s. 6d. for three subjects taken in any one year—and the first examinations are to be held next year. Details of the scheme, which is additional to that inaugurated by the Society of Arts for transport workers in 1936, may be obtained from the examinations officer, Royal Society of Arts, 28, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

"CLASS B" RELEASE Extended to All On Housing Work

PRIORITY [illegible] of a greater number of [illegible] Class B [illegible] the demobilisation scheme is promised in Ministry of Health circular 163/45, sent to local authorities on September 17.

A previous circular on Class B releases (19/45) had restricted those qualifying for release to two classes only:

Individual specialists needed for housing work vital to the national interest; and

Sanitary inspectors;

and had subjected the release of men and women in these limited classes to stringent rules. The post for which any officer was required must be a key one; the officer must have all the qualifications needed to fill it; the employer must prove that it could not be filled from civilian sources; that other arrangements for performance of the work were impracticable, and that it would be contrary to the national interest for the officer to await release in his normal turn; and no officer might be released to fill a post for which a civilian of the same age would not be eligible for deferment.

Circular 163/45 extends the classes qualifying for release under Class B to administrative, [illegible] and clerical officers, as well as technical officers. The only stipulation now is that the officer for whom release is sought must be "urgently required in connection with housing schemes."

Local authorities are asked to notify the Ministry in future as soon as released men report back for duty—this to enable it to keep watch on any cases in which release is unduly delayed.

Applications for release must be made to the Ministry of Health, or other appropriate Government department. The application must be made by the employer, not by the man whose release is sought. Applications for the release of doctors and dentists should be submitted through medical or dental war committees.

Apart from the classes mentioned above, there is no priority release for local government officers. In view of the overriding need to preserve the just basis of the demobilisation scheme—namely age and length of service—NALGO has decided not to ask for any special consideration for them.

SICKNESS

Winter, with its many trials—not the least of which is sickness—will soon be upon us. Are you a member of the NALGO Provident, Sickness or Hospital and Nursing Home schemes? If not, apply for membership before it is too late. Details available from NALGO local correspondents or 24, Abingdon St., S.W.1

Hospital Treatment During Final Leave. Circular 112/45 explains that most men released or discharged from the Forces and auxiliary services will be granted 56 days' final leave, with additional days for service overseas. During this period, although free to take up civilian employment, they will be entitled to hospital treatment in the same way as members of the Forces on ordinary leave. Persons who were insured under the National Health Insurance Acts during their service will be able to claim medical benefit under the Acts during their final leave, but if they need hospital treatment this will normally be given at the nearest E.M.S. or service hospital.

Salaries and Service Conditions

NORTH-EASTERN

The provincial council appeals committee, upon a claim by the Association, has awarded an increase of £150 by three annual increments, from October 1, 1944, in the salary of the engineer and surveyor employed by Stanley U.D., and Stanley council has adopted the award.

Fifty-one authorities have adopted the provincial council recommendations for annual holidays, the latest being Amble U.D., Durham and Weardale R.D.s and the River Blyth Port Health Authority.

Durham and Weardale R.D.s and River Blyth Port Health Authority have also adopted the provincial council scheme for sick pay, bringing the total of adopting authorities to 45.

Cost of Living Now 31% Up

The Ministry of Labour cost-of-living index fell two points last month to 203, representing an increase of 31 per cent since the outbreak of war.

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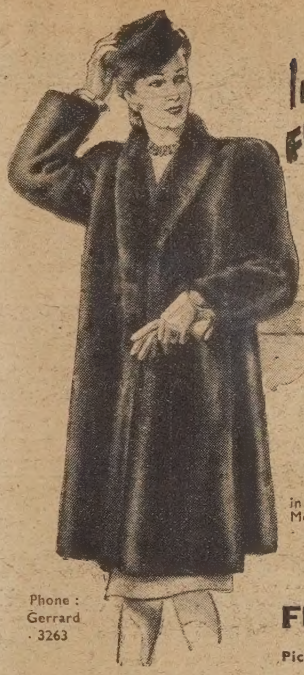

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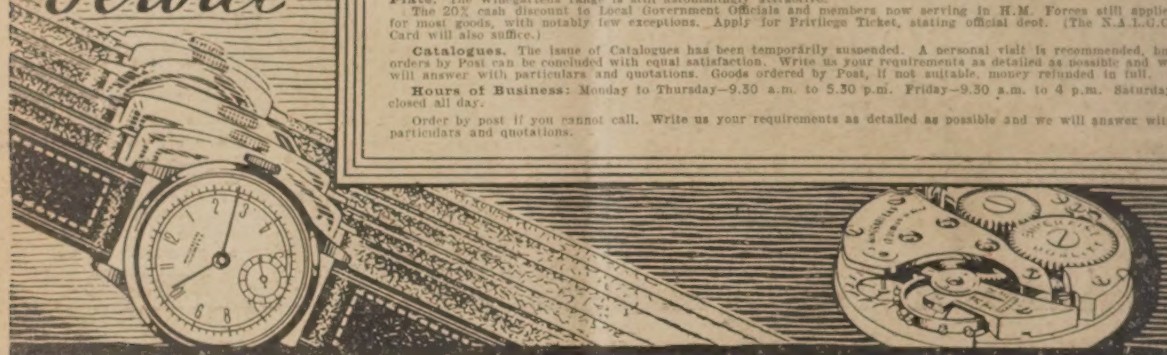

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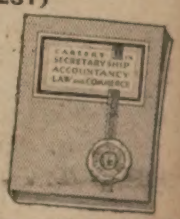

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